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Dispensationalism Disparaging the Gospel

Dispensationalism — and premillennialism, chiliasm in general — is charged with disparaging the Gospel. See CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, 1935, p. 481 ff.¹⁾ In an article entitled "Modern Dispensationalism and the Doctrine of the Unity of Scrip-

1) "In various ways chiliasm, dispensationalism, goes against the Gospel principle. 1) 'When it actually enters the heart, it diverts the heart and mind from the hidden spiritual glory of the Christian life, which consists in the assurance of the forgiveness of sins and of the future heavenly heritage, and puts in place of it the expectation of external and earthly grandeur.' (F. Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, III, p. 592.) . . . 2) It fails to give full scope to the Gospel-message. The thoroughgoing chiliasm has made, not soteriology, but eschatology, the chilastic eschatology at that, the center of his theology. . . . 3) It undervalues the Gospel. The chilasts indeed preach the Gospel of salvation through the blood of Christ with great earnestness and vigor. But at the same time they disparage this glorious Gospel. For one thing, the present dispensation is characterized by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ Crucified. But this is not the final dispensation. A better one is coming — the dispensation of the Kingdom. Chiliasm declares in effect that the Church is to look forward to something better than the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins. It obscures the glory of the Gospel. Again, it belittles the Gospel by replacing the simple Gospel-preaching of the present era with the more efficient instrumentalities of the millennium, instrumentalities of force and of visible splendor, and new revelations as agencies to accomplish the conversion of sinners. The millennial kingdom will exert a wider influence than the Kingdom of Grace, equipped only with the Gospel. The Gospel saves but a few. It is a poor, weak Gospel. But when the millennial forces are once put in operation, a universal salvation will result. . . . 4) Chiliasm, in its normal development, directly antagonizes the Gospel of grace. Dispensationalism does just that. It sets up in effect a way of salvation different from that of the Gospel. The final, the most glorious dispensation will not be one of grace. . . . Again, there are chilasts who antagonize the Gospel in the most direct way; they teach the possibility of salvation by works of the Law. In the millennial kingdom, the final and most glorious dispensation, the legal system, the law of merit, rules. Jesus Christ did at one time, and He will again, preach the Law as the vehicle of God's blessings. — 'Any theory which thus disparages the Gospel of the grace of God must be false.' (C. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, III, p. 865.)"

ture," published in the *Evangelical Quarterly*, January, 1936, pp. 24-35, Dr. Oswald T. Allis, at that time professor of Hebrew in Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, makes the same charge. And the answer to this article, entitled "Dispensationalism," by Dr. L. S. Chafer, president of Dallas Theological Seminary, which appeared in the October-December, 1936, issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra*, pp. 390-449, does not invalidate the charge, but substantiates it.

Professor Allis charges that dispensationalism disparages the Gospel. "The very heart of the Bible is its message of salvation. It is because it gives the only true and adequate answer to the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' that the Bible is the most precious Book in the world. Now, the question may very properly be asked in view of the alleged distinct dispensations whether the Bible gives a consistent answer to this question throughout or not. In *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* Dr. Scofield makes a statement that is arresting, to say the least: 'It should be needless to say that in this dispensation neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved otherwise than by the exercise of that faith on the Lord Jesus Christ whereby both are born again. . . .' Why the qualifying words '*in this dispensation*?' the reader naturally asks. Have there been, or are there to be, dispensations of which this could not be said? The very fact that the statement is qualified implies or at least suggests an affirmative answer. But the question is far too important to leave the answer to mere inference. Is there definite warrant for such an inference? For an answer to our question we turn back to the *Scofield Bible*. A comment on the word 'Gentiles' at Matt. 10, 5 reads thus: 'The kingdom was promised to the Jews. Gentiles could be blessed only through Christ crucified and risen. Cf. John 12, 20-24.' Here we have a statement that seems clearly to teach that there was an essential difference between salvation for the Jew and salvation for the Gentile. The one needed the kingdom, the other needed Christ crucified and risen. We turn to a still more noteworthy statement. In the comment on the word 'everlasting,' Rev. 14, 6, we are told in the *Scofield Bible* that 'four forms of the Gospel are to be distinguished.' They are: the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Gospel of the grace of God, the everlasting Gospel, and what Paul calls 'my Gospel.' It is with the first two 'forms' that we are here particularly concerned. They are defined and contrasted in the following terms: '(1) The Gospel of the Kingdom. This is the good news that God purposed to set up on the earth, in fulfilment of the Davidic covenant, a kingdom, political, spiritual, Israelitist, universal, over which God's Son, David's Heir, shall be King and which shall be, for one thousand years, the manifestation of the righteousness of God in human

affairs. See Matt. 3, 2, note. (2) The Gospel of the grace of God. This is the good news that Jesus Christ, the rejected King, has died on the cross for the sins of the world, that He was raised from the dead for our justification, and that by Him all that believe are justified from all things. It is the Gospel "of the grace of God," Acts 20, 24, because it saves those whom the Law curses; of "our salvation," Eph. 1, 13, because it is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. 1, 16. . . . The most startling thing about these two 'forms' of the Gospel, when we compare them, is their mutual exclusiveness. The one speaks of the Davidic King, the other of the crucified and risen Savior. The Gospel of the grace of God—in a word, the Cross—belongs to the Church age; the Gospel of the Kingdom was preached before the Church was founded and is to be preached after the Church is 'raptured.' But it is a different gospel. It is the gospel of the Crown, not the Cross. This is consistent dispensationalism. 'Grace' and 'the Kingdom' belong to two distinct dispensations which are set definitely in contrast, and each has a Gospel of its own. Salvation clearly will be on quite a different basis in the Kingdom age from what it is today in the Church age. . . ."

"The distinction between the Church age and the Kingdom age, a distinction which involves the recognition of a distinct 'Gospel' for each, brings us naturally and inevitably to this question: How shall men be saved in the Kingdom age? For an answer to this question we turn to the 'Summary' on the 'Kingdom' (Old Testament) as given in the *Scofield Bible*, where we read: 'The Kingdom is to be established by power, not persuasion, and is to follow divine judgment upon the Gentile world-powers, Ps. 2, 4—9; Is. 9, 7; Dan. 2, 35. 44. 45; 7, 26. 27; Zech. 14, 1—19. See Zech. 6, 11, *note*.' It will be observed that practically all the passages here quoted speak in terms of kingly rule and obedient service, but not in terms of redemption or atonement. Men are to be saved apparently by obedience to the King and not by trust in the Savior. The Sermon on the Mount is said to give us the 'constitution' of the Kingdom. It is 'pure law'; and apparently it is to be perfectly kept by all the righteous in the Kingdom age. Thus we observe that the New Testament Kingdom age of the future has a very important feature in common with the Old Testament Kingdom age. The Davidic kingdom belonged to, and was a part of, the dispensation of the 'law.' The future Kingdom age will likewise be an age of 'law,' not of 'grace.' . . ."

"In the comment on what the *Scofield Bible* declares to be 'dispensationally . . . the most important passage in the New Testament,' Acts 15, 13 f., the statement is made: 'The Gospel [that is, "the Gospel of the grace of God"] has never anywhere converted

all, but everywhere called out *some*.' But during the Kingdom age 'the enormous majority of earth's inhabitants will be saved,' and the comment goes on to state: 'The New Testament, Rev. 20, 1-5, adds a detail of immense significance — the removal of Satan from the scene. It is impossible to conceive to what heights of spiritual, intellectual, and physical perfection humanity will attain in this its coming age of righteousness and peace, Is. 11, 4-9; Ps. 72, 1-10.' What does this mean if not that the preaching of the Cross is relatively of little efficacy as compared with the exercise of the kingly power at, or in connection with, the coming of the King and the 'removal of Satan from the scene' in the Kingdom age? And if the establishment of the Kingdom and the removal of Satan can make it possible for men to attain in that age to such incredible heights of spiritual, intellectual, and physical perfection, how will this 'enormous majority of earth-dwellers' be able to join with the Church-saints, who never attained to these heights, in singing praises to the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us by His precious blood? What meaning will the Cross have for those who have attained to a legal righteousness in the Kingdom age?"

"This separation between the Kingdom and the Church, which is as unscriptural as it is dangerous, leads to one of the most serious errors of dispensationalism, the tendency to minimize the importance of the present Gospel age in the interest of the Kingdom age that is to come. This is the age of individual conversions, the snatching of a brand here and there from the burning. That is to be an age of mass conversions, nations born in a day. The dispensationalist exalts the cross as the only hope of hell-deserving sinners — with one exception. It is a very important exception. It is for the dispensation of grace, for the Church age, and for this age only, that he exalts the cross. . . . The 'Gospel of the grace of God' is, according to the *Scofield Bible* (on Matt. 4, 17), the Gospel for the Church age; and the Church age is a parenthesis of indeterminate length between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Dan. 9. It is an interlude in the history of God's people, Israel. It is a time when the great prophetic clock is silent. It does not figure in prophetic history. It is 'time out' in sacred chronology. Yet this parenthesis period is the Church age, the age of the Cross, of the preaching of the Gospel of the grace of God. How could a 'Bible Christian' minimize more seriously the value and centrality of the Cross in Biblical Revelation? The 'parenthesis' view of the Church which is taught in the *Scofield Bible* sheds important light upon the distinction drawn there between the Gospel of the grace of God and the Gospel of the Kingdom. Throughout the entire Church age the Gospel of the grace of God has been, and is to be,

proclaimed by *Christians*, i. e., by Church saints. But if the entire Church, every true Christian, is to be 'raptured' at the [invisible] return of Christ for His saints, there occurs of necessity a definite *break* between the Church age and the Kingdom age which it is difficult to bridge. After the Rapture there will be no Christians left on earth to preach the Gospel, which has been the power of God unto salvation during the Church age. Consequently those who hold this view have recourse to the 'two witnesses' (Moses and Elijah or Enoch and Elijah) of Rev. 11, 3, and a Jewish remnant who will have turned unto the Lord during the Great Tribulation (*Scofield Bible*, p. 1205). They are to rouse up and proclaim the 'beautiful Gospel of the Kingdom.' (*Ibid.*, p. 949.) We observe therefore that the Gospel of the Kingdom differs from the Gospel of the grace of God no less as to its contents than as to its heralds. . . . Its heralds are to be not the New Testament apostles but Old Testament saints, and not believing Christians but Jews who have not believed at the preaching of the Gospel of the grace of God during the Church age (had they done so, they would have been raptured), but to whom the preaching of the Cross was foolishness and who remained in unbelief until after the Rapture. How could the break between the Kingdom and the Church be made more emphatic?"

" . . . We ask the dispensationalists to read again the definition of the 'Gospel of the Kingdom' and then to face the question seriously and squarely, Where does the Cross come in? It is hard to see how any thoroughgoing dispensationalist can sing the lines of the familiar hymn 'In the Cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time; All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime.' For according to the logic of his position the Cross belongs to the Church age, not to sacred story as a whole. And it is a *parenthesis*, we are tempted to say, *merely* a parenthesis, between the Kingdom age that is past and the Kingdom age that is yet to come. . . . The Bible also teaches that this is the age of the invisible reign of the sovereign Lord, who said, 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.' Yet the dispensationalist regards this age as demonstrably bankrupt and is looking to the Kingdom age to accomplish by a display of kingly power and through the binding of Satan what the preaching of the Cross has been unable to accomplish in nineteen Christian centuries. What is this if not to minimize the Cross? . . . If we are to have the distinct dispensations of Law, grace, and the kingdom, and if the dispensation of grace, or the Church age, is to be regarded as merely an interlude in God's dealings with Israel, a parenthesis in the history of redemption, the inferences and conclusions which we have stated, are logical and inevitable. . . ."

Does dispensationalism disparage, minimize, the Gospel, as charged by Dr. Allis and others? Dr. Chafer indignantly denies the charge. But if his account of dispensationalism is true, — and he is a leader of this school of premillennialistic thought, — the dispensationalists have not been falsely accused by Dr. Allis. His article, an "outline of dispensational fundamentals," contains those very teachings on which Dr. Allis and others base the charge that dispensationalism disparages the Gospel. He does not deny that the dispensationalists teach these things. He glories in them. We herewith submit copious extracts from his article and leave it to our readers to judge whether these teachings glorify or disparage the Gospel.

"The Bible sets forth at length three distinct and complete divine rulings which govern human actions. Two are addressed to Israel, one in the age that is past, known as the Mosaic Law, and the other the setting forth of the terms of admission into, and the required conduct in, the Messianic kingdom when that kingdom is set up in the earth. The third is addressed to Christians and provides divine direction in this age for the heavenly people who are already perfected, as to standing, in Christ Jesus. These three rules of life do present widely different economies. . . . The third administration which is contained in the Bible [this refers to the second of the divine rulings addressed to Israel] is that which is designed to govern the earthly people in relation to their coming earthly kingdom. It is explicit also as to the requirements that are to be imposed upon those who enter that kingdom. This body of Scripture is found in the Old Testament portions which anticipate the Messianic kingdom and in large portions of the synoptic gospels. *The essential elements of a grace administration*²⁾ — faith as the sole basis of acceptance with God, unmerited acceptance through a perfect standing in Christ, the present possession of eternal life, an absolute security from all condemnation, and the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit — are not found in the kingdom administration. On the other hand, it is declared to be the fulfilling of 'the law and the prophets,' Matt. 5, 17, 18; 7, 12, and is seen to be an extension of the *Mosaic Law* into realms of meritorious obligation, which blast and wither as the Mosaic system could never do, Matt. 5, 20—48." (Pp. 413—416.) "The rule governing the conduct of Israelites is in two principal divisions, namely, that which obtained from Moses to Christ, or the Mosaic Law, and that which determines entrance into, and conditions of, life within the yet future kingdom on the earth. The terms of admission into the Kingdom as set forth in Matt. 5, 1 to 7, 27 are

2) Italics in this section our own; original italics are so indicated.

in reality the Mosaic requirements intensified by Christ's own interpretation of them. The contrasts which He draws between the former interpretation of these laws and His own interpretation does not tend to soften anything in the interests of grace, but rather binds with greater legal demands than any unaided person in the present age can hope to achieve. Why are the plain injunctions of Matt. 5, 39-42; 10, 8-14; 24, 20 so universally ignored today if it is not that it is so generally recognized that these injunctions belong to conditions obtaining in another age? Will not the exalted demands of the Sermon on the Mount be more easily obeyed when earthly conditions are changed as they will be? The Church will be removed and Israel advanced to a position above all nations of the earth, with Jehovah's Law written in their hearts and the Spirit poured out on all flesh. Satan will be bound and in the abyss; the present world system will have been destroyed; the bondage of corruption now resting upon creation will be lifted, and Christ, as the glorified Son of David, will be reigning on David's throne out from Jerusalem and over the whole earth. The effect of that reign will be that righteousness and peace shall cover the earth as waters cover the face of the deep." (P. 443.)³⁾

This is exactly what Dr. Allis and we lay to the charge of dispensationalism: The last dispensation, the most glorious one, the dispensation of the Kingdom, is the reign of the Mosaic Law. And this reign of the Law accomplishes what the reign of grace could not accomplish: it covers the earth with righteousness and peace. They may protest that this teaching does not disparage the Gospel. Let the reader judge!

Does dispensationalism teach that the instrumentalities of power and splendor as applied in the Kingdom age are more efficient than the Gospel? Does it uphold or repudiate the statement of the *Scofield Bible* "The Kingdom is to be established by power, not persuasion"? The article under discussion does not discuss this point beyond stating that the effect of the reign of Christ as the glorified Son of David will be that righteousness and peace shall cover the earth as waters cover the face of the deep and that "a nation shall be born 'at once'" (p. 424); but in *Bibliotheca Sacra*

3) In *Premillennialism or Amillennialism?* a book highly recommended by *Bibliotheca Sacra* (p. 491), Charles Feinberg, professor at Dallas Theological Seminary and a pupil of Dr. Chafer, writes: "Israel was governed (and will be in the millennial age) by a principle wholly foreign to that which is in force in the Church age. The principle governing in the Church [age] is that of grace." (P. 190.) "Many Gentiles are saved out of the Great Tribulation as a result of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom." (P. 135.) "God does not have two mutually exclusive principles, as Law and grace, operative in one period." (P. 126.)

of July, 1934, p. 280, Dr. Chafer explicitly states that "the kingdoms of this world do not become the kingdom of Christ by virtue of human service and ministry but by the sudden and mighty power of God and in the midst of humanity's rebellion against God on earth." And Professor Feinberg writes: "The next objection lodged against the premillennialists is a serious one, but one which cannot be sustained. It is claimed that the millennial view disparages the Gospel, because it teaches conversion by means foreign to the Gospel, such as wrath, judgment, or a display of glory. Premillennialists assuredly do not disparage the Gospel. It is true that Christ commissioned each believer to preach the Gospel to every creature, but that does not automatically mean that every one is to be saved. We do not believe that the Gospel has any less power than the amillennialists do. It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, whether Jew or Gentile. But the burden of proof rests on the amillennialist to show that it is the avowed purpose of God to save *all in this age by the Gospel*. In other words, it is not a question of power, but a matter of purpose." (*Op. cit.*, p. 219 f.) Professor Feinberg admits that dispensationalism teaches conversion by a display of glory, etc., in the Kingdom. What he denies is that this teaching disparages the Gospel.⁴⁾ To put just one more witness on the stand, Dr. H. W. Frost, a prominent dispensationalist, declares: "In the coming dispensation [the Kingdom] He will make salvation possible by consummating all that the past promised and the present secures, enjoining faith with works and *constraining* men to worship Christ as they see Him in all the splendor of His being and reign, Zech. 14, 9—21." (*The Second Coming of Christ*, p. 132.) Certainly the dispensationalists believe, teach, and confess that in the Kingdom age the Gospel will be replaced by more powerful agencies.

Speaking of the way of salvation for the Israelites as taught in the *Scofield Bible*, Dr. Allis says: "Men are to be saved apparently by obedience to the King and not by trust in the Savior. The Sermon on the Mount is said to give us the 'Constitution' of the Kingdom. It is 'pure Law,' and apparently it is to be *perfectly kept* by all the righteous in the Kingdom age. (Page 999, note 2.) It is not

4) The argument is: The dispensationalist does not disparage the Gospel since he admits that it is the power of God unto salvation. However, there is that fatal restriction: "*in this age*." Now the Gospel saves (and saves only a few), but later on other instrumentalities will be applied. Recall the statement of Dr. Allis: "The dispensationalist exalts the Cross—with one exception. It is for the dispensation of grace, for the *Church age*, and for *this age only*, that he exalts the Cross." The same restriction is made by Dr. Chafer in our article: "The divine purpose *in this age* is an all-satisfying and complete demonstration of grace" (p. 427), and: "It may be concluded that the *present primary-age* purpose of God is the demonstration of His grace" (p. 429).

expressly stated here that *perfect obedience* will constitute 'righteousness' in the Kingdom age. But the inference is a natural one." In our article Dr. Chafer states just that in express terms. We read on page 425: "Matt. 5, 20 declares the condition upon which a Jew might hope to enter the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is entered by a righteousness *exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.*" On page 423 we read: "Luke 10, 25-29. In this passage the lawyer asks as to how he may *inherit* [italics in the original] eternal life and is told by Christ in the most absolute terms that eternal life *for him* is gained by the keeping of that contained in the Mosaic Law. In Luke 18, 18-27 it is likewise reported that a young ruler made the same inquiry, and to this sincere man our Lord quoted the Mosaic commandments; but when the young man declared that these things had been kept by him from his youth, Christ did not chide him for falsehood, but took him on to the ground of complete surrender of all he was and all he had as the way into that state which Christ termed '*perfect*' [italics in original]." We get the significance of these statements when we read on the same page: "Dr. Charles Hodge states: 'The Scriptures know nothing of any other than two methods of attaining eternal life: the one that which demands *perfect obedience*, and the other that which demands faith. (*Syst. Theol.*, II, p. 117.)' That offer of eternal life which depends on obedience is *thought by Dr. Hodge and others to be hypothetical and unattainable* by any one and therefore serves to enforce the fact that there is but one practical way to secure eternal life — by faith alone. There are two important factors often omitted from this discussion. . . ." Our article is denying that salvation through perfect obedience of the Law of Moses was unattainable by the lawyer and the young ruler. In the Kingdom the Jews obtain a perfect righteousness by perfect obedience. — Does such a teaching leave the Gospel of the *sola gratia* intact?⁵⁾

5) A *perfect* righteousness will be attained by the Jews in the Kingdom. So we are told on page 425. However, on page 416 we read: "These Kingdom injunctions (Matt. 5, 20-48), though suited to the conditions that will then obtain, could *perfect no one as men in Christ are now perfected*, nor are they adopted as a rule of life for those already complete in Christ Jesus." We do not know what to make of this, as little as we know what to make of various other tenets of the chiliastic faith. Does it mean that there are two kinds of *perfect* obediences of the Law? Surely it cannot mean that. It does mean, as these men state elsewhere, that the Sermon on the Mount does not apply to the present age — and that is false. But what can be the meaning of the statement that the Law as expounded by Jesus is "not adapted as a rule of life for those already complete in Christ Jesus"? The Christian does not according to the new man, need the Law. But on account of his flesh he needs it, and he finds the Sermon on the Mount perfectly adapted to his needs as a rule of life. What can Dr. Chafer mean?

"The terms of admission *into the Kingdom* are the Mosaic requirements, intensified by Christ's own interpretation." What was the rule governing the conduct of Israelites which obtained from *Moses to Christ*, under the fifth dispensation, the Dispensation of the Law? "For faithfulness under the Law they were promised a share in the future glories which Jehovah, with unconditional sovereignty, covenanted to the nation. . . . Blessing under Mosaic economy was conditioned on individual faithfulness to the Law. This economy formed a secondary covenant, which was *meritorious in character*." (P. 441.) "This fact necessitates the recognition of a sphere wherein God deals with individuals *as to their personal conduct*. . . . When under the Mosaic Law, the individual Israelite was *on an unyielding meritorious basis*." (P. 440.) Were Israelites actually saved through their obedience to the Law? H. Frost unhesitatingly affirms this. "Through the five dispensations of the past God made salvation possible by revealing Himself through dramatic miracles and specific laws and *by requiring works*." (*The Second Coming of Christ*, p. 131.) Will the other dispensationalists affirm it? Does the *Scofield Bible* affirm it? Dr. Allis says: "In justice to Dr. Scofield it should be stated here that he not only recognizes but stresses the fact that the Old Testament ritual of sacrifice plainly sets forth in type Christ in His atoning work as Savior." According to this, Dr. Scofield teaches that at the time of the Old Testament Israelites were saved, not through the Law but through faith in Christ. Now, what does Dr. Chafer teach? In the first place, he holds that "*none were able to keep the Law perfectly*." (In the Kingdom age they will be able to keep it perfectly; they were not able to do so in the Law age.) In the second place, he teaches that they were saved by means of the sacrifices. Does that mean that they were saved through faith in Christ or that the offering of the sacrifice *as a prescribed work* saved them? Here is how Dr. Chafer presents the matter: "That offer of eternal life which depends on obedience is thought by Dr. Hodge and others to be hypothetical and unattainable by any one and therefore serves to enforce the fact that there is but one practical way to secure eternal life—*by faith alone*. *There are two important factors often omitted* from this discussion: (a) Eternal life, if offered on the ground of obedience to all, is offered only to those who are Israelites, and (b) they had the continuing animal sacrifices, which, when faithfully offered, maintained for them a righteous position before God and became the ground of forgiveness for every failure. Because of this forgiveness the standing of a Jew before God could not have been hypothetical. . . . Distinction must be made between the Law as a rule of life which none were able to keep perfectly

and the Law as a system which not only set forth the high and holy demands upon personal conduct, but also provided complete divine forgiveness through the sacrifices. The final standing of any Jew before God was not based on Law observance alone, but contemplated that Jew in the light of the sacrifices he had presented in his own behalf." (P. 423.) Note, first, the statement that two things gave the Jew the right standing before God: his observance of the Law *and* the faithful offering of sacrifices. That is a denial of the *sola fide*, the heart of the Gospel. Dr. Chafer penned these lines with the express intention of repudiating the "*by faith alone*." And we ask, secondly, What is meant by "offering the animal sacrifices *faithfully*?" It is nowhere stated that the sacrifices had saving value only because they were *types of Christ's sacrifice*. Examine once more the statement just given. And examine these other statements on the same subject: "In case of failure to meet the moral and spiritual obligations resting upon the Jews because of their covenant position, the sacrifices were provided as a *righteous* basis of restoration to their covenant privileges. . . . The individual Jew might so fail in his *conduct and so neglect the sacrifices* as, in the end, to be disowned by God and cast out." (P. 422.) "For faithful observance of the Law, *which included the remedial value of the sacrifices*, they were promised immediate prosperity and tranquillity." (P. 440.) "What is identified as a spiritual remnant in Israel, seen in all her generations from Moses to Christ, is none other than those who through personal faithfulness claimed the immediate blessings which the Law provided. Some Israelites did live on a very high plane and were in much personal blessing. To this a multitude of Old Testament saints bear witness, Heb. 11, 1—38; and none are more conspicuous than Daniel. When looking back upon his experience in Judaism, the Apostle Paul could say that he had been, as 'touching the *righteousness which is in the Law*, blameless,' Phil. 3, 6. This did not imply sinless perfection, but that he had *always provided the requisite sacrifices*. On that basis the faithful Jew lived and was accepted of God in the Mosaic system." (P. 441.) Never a word of the sacrifices' being a *type*, never a word of faith in the coming Savior; only the stressing of the sacrifices as *required*, as belonging to the *righteousness of the Law*. Dr. Chafer is certainly teaching that under the Mosaic system there was salvation through the Law.⁶⁾

6) Dr. Chafer's article, as all chiliastic writings, makes hard reading. We read on page 431: "The individual Israelite, when under the Mosaic Law, was, as to his personal blessing, under a secondary, meritorious covenant with gracious provisions in the animal sacrifices for the covering and cure of his sins and failures." But on page 426 we had read: "Of

Surely dispensationalism is a disparagement of the Gospel. He is out of harmony with the Spirit of the Gospel who can write down these thoughts: "If no other age — those recorded in history or those anticipated in prophecy — could it be said that its primary divine purpose is the making by God of a specific demonstration, all satisfying to Himself, of His grace. Likewise, *in no other age* could it be said that those who are saved are 'accepted in the Beloved.'" (P. 429.) He detracts from the glory of the Gospel who places beside it other means of salvation. The children of God in the Old Testament trusted in the work of Christ solely and entirely for their salvation. They lived under the Law indeed, but the Gospel of Christ was their sole hope and comfort. The apostles did not know the theology of dispensationalism, but spoke and taught in this manner: "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, *even as they*" ("our fathers"), Acts 15, 11. He makes everything of the Gospel who says: "The blessed proclamation, the Gospel, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins through the blessed Seed, that is, Christ, has from the beginning of the world been the greatest consolation and treasure to all pious kings, all prophets, all believers. . . . For they have believed in the same Christ in whom we believe; for from the beginning of the world no saint has been saved in any other way than through the faith of the same Gospel." (Apology; *Trigl.*, p. 273.) Seven different dispensations? You do not know the Gospel! There is but one dispensation — one will and way of God to save — one Gospel. Yes, surely, there is, Scripturally speaking,

the blessings which Judaism provided, some temporal and spiritual experiences were immediately secured through adjustment to the Mosaic system; but the larger features of the *taking away of sin*, the receiving of eternal life, and the Kingdom glories, *were reserved for the return of their King.*" (P. 426.) Did, or did not, Israel obtain forgiveness of sins *under the Mosaic system?* — Here is another sample. The exigencies of the situation created by the dispensational scheme require that the New Covenant of Jer. 31, 31—40 ("I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel. . . . I will put My Law in their inward parts. . . . I will forgive their iniquity") take in only the Jews ("these promises do not apply even remotely to the Church," p. 438), and that, in turn, requires that some differences between this New Covenant and the "New Covenant now in force for the Church" be found. These are the differences as set forth on page 438: "(a) Jehovah's Law will be written on the heart of the Jew; but God, by His indwelling Spirit, is now working in the believer both to will and to do of His good pleasure. (b) Jehovah will be Israel's God, and they will be His people; but the Christian is now *in Christ* [italics in original], and his life is now 'hid with Christ in God.' (c) All Israel shall know the Lord; but the Christian is in the most vital union and communion with God as Father. (d) Israel's iniquities will be forgiven and her sins remembered no more; but for the one in Christ judicial forgiveness is secured to the extent that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and they have been forgiven all trespasses." A chiliast may understand that; we do not.

the Old Testament, the "dispensation" of the Law, and the New Testament, the "dispensation" of the Gospel; but, again speaking Scripturally, back of the economy of the Mosaic Law there always was the economy of grace, always operative, always the power of God unto salvation. Those who teach that men have been saved, or will be saved, in a fabulous future Kingdom age other than by the Gospel are detractors of the Gospel.

We have not yet finished with the *Bibliotheca Sacra* article. It contains several paragraphs which directly aim to defend dispensationalism against the charge that it disparages the Gospel. Dr. Chafer stresses particularly two points. He asserts that dispensationalism (a) magnifies the Gospel and (b) extols the grace of God, hence cannot be charged with minimizing the Gospel of grace. Let us examine these claims.

(a) Dr. Chafer asserts that dispensationalism sets the Gospel of grace above the Gospel of the Kingdom. To our mind the following words were written to establish that point: "These kingdom injunctions, though suited to the conditions that will then obtain, could perfect no one *as men in Christ are now perfected*." (P. 416.) "The distinctive 'good news' of the Gospel of the Kingdom is the announcement of the presence of the long-expected Messiah and His predicted blessings for Israel. Over against this the Gospel of the grace of God is even *more extensive* and announces a plan of *perfect* salvation for Jew and Gentile alike. . . . The one and only requirement on the human side which the Kingdom Gospel imposes is *repentance* [italics in original], while the only requirement in the Gospel of the grace of God is *faith*, or *believing* [italics in original]. The requirement on the human side for present salvation is belief in Christ as Savior, which belief includes all the repentance (which is a change of mind) that a *spiritually dead person can produce*. . . . Believing as related to the Messiah must be distinguished from *believing unto salvation*. Since the first preaching of the Kingdom Gospel called for repentance only, it is evident that this Gospel call was not for the *salvation even of Israel*, but was for their revival and restoration." (P. 436.) (This paragraph was written as reply to Dr. Allis's criticism of the late Dr. Scofield for distinguishing at least four uses of the word "gospel." See also what was quoted above on the difference between the New Covenant of Israel and the New Covenant of the Church. The point here made is that dispensationalism cannot be charged with disparaging the Gospel; for it exalts the Gospel of grace above the Gospel of the Kingdom.

This calls, first, for the obvious remark that such a defense involves the abandonment of the fundamental position of dispensationalism. The entire dispensational scheme is built up on the

proposition that the Kingdom age is the most glorious dispensation. (See above.) A dispensationalist cannot remain a dispensationalist in good standing if he teaches that the Gospel of grace is superior to the Gospel of the Kingdom. Dr. Chafer's proposition must therefore be amended. What he means is, not that the Gospel of grace is *absolutely* superior to the Gospel of the Kingdom, but that it surpasses the other Gospel only *in some respects*. Of that anon.

Next, study the statement that "the only requirement on the human side which the Kingdom Gospel imposes is *repentance*, while the only requirement in the Gospel of the grace of God is *faith*." Whatever the word "repentance" here may mean, we have here the explicit statement that the two gospels essentially differ, and if we understand the writer correctly, he here makes the fatal admission that his "gospel of the Kingdom" is of a *legal* nature; for it imposes not faith, but repentance. Further, do the words "which belief includes all the repentance (which is a change of mind) that a spiritually dead person can produce" mean what they say? Can the spiritually dead person produce something that is included in faith? We do not know whether the tenet is generally held among the dispensationalists that the spiritually dead person retains spiritual powers.

Next, we do not know what to make of the statement that "believing as related to the Messiah must be distinguished from believing unto salvation. The first preaching of the Kingdom Gospel was not for the salvation even of Israel, but was for their revival and restoration." Was the salvation which according to the dispensational scheme was offered to Israel by John the Baptist and Christ (in the beginning of His ministry) not real salvation? Does Dr. Chafer hold that real salvation is found only in the *second* preaching of the Kingdom Gospel? Are there, then, two different gospels of the Kingdom? We cannot find our way through the maze.

Next, is the *salvation* gained by Israel in the Kingdom different in nature from the salvation gained by men in the Gospel age? Yes. If you would ask the dispensationalist: Will the inhabitants of the Kingdom be eternally saved, enjoying heavenly bliss? he would tell you that "eternal salvation" and "*heavenly bliss*" are not synonyms. What Dr. Chafer tells us on this subject forms one of the *weirdest* chapters in the premillennialist romance. This is the story of the three kinds of human beings now living and of their final destination: "The Bible presents the origin, present estate, and destiny of the three widely different classes of people dwelling together on the earth, the Gentiles, the Jews, and the Christians." ("The Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God, 1 Cor. 10, 32.") The **Gentiles** will yet share, as a subordinate

people, with Israel in her coming kingdom glory. In *this age* they are privileged, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus, to be partakers of a *heavenly* citizenship and glory. . . . Thus it is disclosed that in spite of the fact that in *this age* the Gospel is preached unto them with its offers of *heavenly* glory and that *in the coming age* they share the blessings of the Kingdom with Israel and appear in the *eternal* glory, they remain Gentiles, in contradistinction to the one nation Israel, to the end of the picture." (P. 397 ff.) "Israel is set apart as an elect nation. . . . These promises (Ps. 45, 8—17; Is. 11, 1 to 12, 6, etc., etc.) are all of an *earthly* glory and concern a land which Jehovah has given as an everlasting possession to His elect people Israel. . . . Nor could the divine administration be the same after the removal of the Church from the earth, after *the regathering of Israel and the restoration of Judaism*, and after the seating of Christ at His second advent on David's throne to rule over the whole earth, as it is now, before those events occur." (P. 400 ff.) "**The Christians.** This new elect company is being called out from the Jews and Gentiles by a spiritual birth of each individual who believes to the saving of his soul. . . . This new-creation people, like the angels, Israel, and the Gentiles, may be traced on into the eternity to come, Heb. 12, 22—24; Rev. 21, 1 to 22, 5. . . . The heavenly people, whether taken individually from either Jewish or Gentile stock, attain immediately by faith unto a standing as perfect as that of Christ. . . . The heavenly people have no burden laid upon them of establishing personal merit before God since they are perfected forever in Christ. . . . The Christian is thus already constituted a heavenly citizen and belongs to another sphere." (P. 406 ff.) Now, where will the Jews, together with those of the Gentiles who have been found worthy to enter Israel's Messianic kingdom ("Many Gentiles are saved out of the Great Tribulation as a result of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom as a witness to all nations. . . . The outcome of the Judgment of the nations, Matt. 25, 31 ff., will be the entrance of the sheep nations into the Kingdom, *later* to be granted to enter into eternal life, while the goat nations will be denied participation in the Kingdom and will go away into everlasting life. . . . The city of Jerusalem will be built again. The nations in the Kingdom will recognize the favored condition of Israel when God wipes away forever their reproach and uses them in *the conversion of the Gentiles*." Thus Feinberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 135, 241, 146), where will they have their eternal home, and where will the Christians have their eternal home? "To such a degree as the soteriology of Judaism and the soteriology of Christianity differ, to the same degree do their eschatologies differ. Judaism has its eschatology reaching on *into eternity* with covenants and

promises which are everlasting. On the other hand, Christianity has its eschatology which is different at every point. . . . There is an eschatology of Judaism and an eschatology of Christianity and each, though wholly different as to details, reaches on into eternity. One of the great burdens of predictive prophecy is the anticipation of the glories of Israel in a transformed earth, under the reign of David's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There is likewise much prediction which anticipates the glories of the redeemed in heaven." (P. 420 ff.) "There is a present distinction between earth and heaven which is preserved even after both are made new. The Scriptures so designate an *earthly people who go on as such into eternity*, and a *heavenly people, who also abide in their heavenly calling forever*." (P. 448.) And on this page the teaching is rejected "that there is nothing in eternity but heaven and hell." Page 487: "God has an *eternal earthly purpose*, in which all Israel will share." Yes, this group of dispensationalists does teach "that Israelites as a nation have their citizenship now and their future destiny centered only in the *earth*, reaching on to the *New Earth* which is yet to be, while Christians have their citizenship and future destiny centered only in *heaven* extending on into the *New Heavens* that are yet to be." (Bibl. Sacra, 1934, p. 147.) This disposes very neatly of the objection raised by Dr. Allis: "If the establishment of the Kingdom and the removal of Satan can make it possible for men to attain in that age to such incredible heights of spiritual, intellectual, and physical perfection, how will this 'enormous majority of earth-dwellers' be able to join with the Church saints, who never attained to these heights, in singing praises to the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us by His precious blood? What meaning will the Cross have for those who have attained to a legal righteousness in the Kingdom age?" The blessed on the New Earth do not sing praises together with the blessed in the New Heavens. They do not meet in all eternity.—To sum up: The eternal salvation of the Kingdom people is only an eternal earthly, new-earthly, salvation, while the salvation granted by the Gospel of grace is an eternal, heavenly salvation.

And now for our final and chief observation. The fact that the dispensationalists teach that the Gospel of grace surpasses the Gospel of the Kingdom in some respects does not absolve them from the charge that they disparage the Gospel. This very fact that they set up two different gospels, two different saving gospels, renders them guilty as charged. For there is but one Gospel. The Gospel of the grace of God is, and remains to the end of time, the only means of salvation. Nothing must be added to it, and nothing must be placed beside it. To speak of two saving gospels darkens the glory of the one saving Gospel. We are not satisfied—the

Gospel is not satisfied — with the protestations of the dispensationalists that they assign the Gospel the superior position *in some respects*. *There is only one saving Gospel.* We are not now discussing the charge that dispensationalism detracts from the glory of the Gospel by proclaiming the *superiority* of the Gospel of the Kingdom. That was substantiated in the first part of the present article. What we are stressing now is that the setting up of *two gospels* (irrespective of their respective worth) constitutes a disparagement of the Gospel. What the dispensationalist urges in his defense substantiates our charge.

(b) A second point urged by Dr. Chafer in defense of dispensationalism is that it extols the grace of God. Nowhere is the grace of God excluded. The dispensations of the Law and of the Kingdom are indeed essentially different from the dispensation of grace, but in each and every dispensation God's grace is at work. He writes: "It may be concluded that the present primary age purpose of God is the demonstration of His grace, which belief in no way precludes one from *recognizing the gracious acts of God in all other ages*. What worthy Bible expositor has ever contended for aught else than this concerning the grace of God?" (P. 429.) "The Jews were born into covenant relation with God wherein there were no limitations imposed as to their faith in Him nor upon their fellowship with Him. *This fact was itself a demonstration of superabounding grace.*" (P. 422.) "Since human faithfulness of whatever degree could never be the exact compensation or exchange for the values of eternal life or for unending blessings in the Kingdom, there is *a very large measure of divine grace* to be seen in the salvation of the elect earthly people." (P. 441.) The dispensationalist thus makes much of "the grace" of God. However, that does not absolve him from the charge of disparaging the Gospel of grace. For the grace which the Gospel proclaims is the *grace of God which saves by forgiving sins*. And our charge is that the dispensationalist disparages this Gospel of the forgiveness of sins by denying that it provides the way of salvation in *all* periods of history, in *all* ages of the world. He does speak of manifestations of grace in these other dispensations; we hear him say: That the Jew was born into covenant relation with God was "a demonstration of superabounding grace"; that God bestows greater blessings in the Kingdom than human faithfulness earns is "a very large measure of divine grace." But all that is beside the point. That does not extol the grace of *the Gospel*. The grace which the dispensationalist magnifies in this connection is not the grace which saves by forgiving sins. As long as he will have men be saved in other dispensations by anything else than the Gospel of grace, of the forgiveness of sins, he is a detractor of the

Gospel of grace, let him laud the "grace" of God as much as he will. The Catholic theologian has much to say of the "grace" of God gained for us by Christ, but since he is talking, not of the gracious forgiveness of sins, but of the *gratia infusa*, we and the premillennialists spurn his teaching as a detraction of the Gospel. Pelagius himself, the archenemy of grace, ascribed the salvation of men to "grace." He chose to call the natural abilities and achievements of man "grace"; man owes his nature, his free will, to God's grace! (Cp. *Lehre u. Wehre*, 31, p. 8.) Did that put him among the champions of the Gospel of grace? We are not putting the dispensationalist in the same class with Pelagius and the Catholic theologian, but we do say that his recognition of a certain measure of "grace" in the Kingdom dispensation does not take him out of the class of the detractors of the Gospel. He remains in that class as long as he maintains: "The essential elements of a grace administration — faith as the sole basis of acceptance with God . . . — are not found in the Kingdom administration." (P. 416.)

There is an axiom in Lutheran theology that every departure from the teaching of Scripture will sooner or later vitiate the article of grace. Chiliasm is a case in point. TH. ENGELDER

The Church and Social Problems

There can be no doubt that the chief aim of the Christian Church, in fact the one aim which the Church as such is to pursue, is that assigned to her in the Great Commission, namely, to preach the Gospel of the salvation of men through the mercy of God in Christ to all nations. It was in this sense that John the Baptist performed his ministry, in preaching repentance and remission of sins, in accordance with the prophecy of his aged father: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins," Luke 1, 76. 77. It was thus that Jesus Himself carried out the duties of His ministry, when He preached: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel," Mark 1, 15. In this spirit St. Paul looked upon his apostolic office, as when he writes to the Romans: "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. 1, 15. 16. He repeats this thought in practically every one of his epistles, as when he writes, 1 Cor. 9, 16: "For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." The attitude

of St. Peter is set forth in the opening of his first letter: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," chap. 1, 3, 4. And St. John just as solemnly declares: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. . . . The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John 1, 3, 7. If this fundamental truth concerning the Church's obligation is ever denied or set aside, the Church will have lost her right of existence.

But while we thus emphasize the Church's fundamental duty and obligation, we dare not overlook the fact that the Great Commission also contains the words: "teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28, 20. This surely includes such statements of Jesus as found in John 13, 14, 15: "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." Peter declares concerning the Savior: "Who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil," Acts 10, 38. What Jesus Himself did He laid upon His disciples as an obligation, as a way of giving evidence of the faith that lived in their hearts. The situation is well put by St. Paul in the clear statement: "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith which worketh by love," Gal. 5, 6. That is undoubtedly the thought behind the strong statements of St. James, especially in chapter 2 of his epistle, which therefore agrees so perfectly with numerous passages in the epistles of Paul, as when we are told, Eph. 2, 10: "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In other words, the Christian religion and all the orthodoxy in the world has no value in itself, as a mere head knowledge, but must become functional, must be carried into execution in the life of the confessors of the Savior. Sanctification must be most intimately connected and integrated with justification. All believers must learn to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, Jas. 1, 22.

These truths were not only theoretically held in the early Church, but they were definitely followed, not by way of making salvation contingent in any way, shape, or form on good works but of having the good works come as the inevitable consequence of a living faith. For that reason we find that systematic char-

itable work, which included the solution of some very difficult social problems, was one of the first endeavors of the congregation at Jerusalem. Evidence of this interest is found in the first accounts of the church. The Christians of Jerusalem practised a voluntary community of goods: "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need," Acts 2, 44. 45. "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need," Acts 4, 34. 35.

The first official joint effort of the congregation at Jerusalem, strange to say, was not the sending out of missionaries or even of emissaries to investigate the status of the newly established congregations in Samaria (for that was done by the apostles, Acts 8, 14) but the problem of giving adequate support to the widows of the Hellenistic Jews. We are told that the Grecians murmured against the Hebrews because their own widows were neglected in the daily ministrations, possibly because the apostles, being themselves full-blooded Jews, were not so familiar with the Hellenistic Jews, especially not with those who were the offspring of mixed marriages. It was for this reason that the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them in a congregation meeting and presented the difficulty to them. And the men who were then appointed by the congregation to attend to this business all bore Greek names, for thus would the objections of the Hellenists most fitly be met. But it was a project in social work which was here carried out, and the apostles sanctioned this systematic charitable endeavor. It seems that somewhat later, when the size of the congregation in Jerusalem had been considerably reduced by the persecution following the trial and stoning of Stephen, the need of special assistants of this type was no longer apparent, for the gifts of the brethren in Antioch in the days of the famine under Claudius Caesar were sent to the elders of the congregation in Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, Acts 11, 30.

This incident, by the way, shows that the congregation at Antioch also engaged in the alleviation of the needs of poor brethren, for we are told that, when Agabus signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world, the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea, Acts 11, 28. 29. They were evidently acting in a concerted effort, in a systematic charitable endeavor; they were carrying out a form of social work.

About the middle of the fifties we are told about another

cooperative effort along the same lines, one which was undertaken on an even larger scale than that of the year 43/44, when the Christians of Syria assisted those of Judea. St. Paul writes, 1 Cor. 16, 1: "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." A few years before, Paul had made a trip through the Galatian territory, and he may have remained in close touch with these congregations during his entire Ephesine sojourn. He had arranged for a collection to be made for the brethren in Judea, who were evidently in distress again, in a depression which extended over a number of years. He now, in a systematic manner and with the assistance not only of the Galatian congregations but also of those of Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, etc.) and Achaia (Corinth and others), planned to bring relief to the brethren in Judea. Cp. 2 Cor. 8 and 9. The collection was planned on a large scale and evidently involved a considerable sum of money, 2 Cor. 9, 20, so that the apostle deemed it advisable to have the congregations elect representatives who were to be in charge of the amount which was to be transmitted to Jerusalem. The names of at least some of these delegates are recorded in Acts 20, 4, the congregations at Berea, Thessalonica, Derbe, and Ephesus being expressly named. It seems that all of these men actually made the trip to Jerusalem with Paul. Acts 21, 15—29.

One more point should be noted in this connection, namely, that, in keeping with the story of the Good Samaritan, the Christians did not confine their charitable endeavors to the members of their own congregations alone. Charity began in the churches and was certainly practised there, but it did not end within the congregations. The statement of St. Paul with reference to charitable work says: "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," Gal. 6, 10. And St. Peter writes: "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity," 2 Pet. 1, 5—7. The same thought is conveyed by St. John, one of his great admonitions reading: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth," 1 John 3, 18.

In all these statements and in all these historical accounts there is not one word which would justify the "social gospel," the idea that we are to build the kingdom of God in an outward, visible manner, by making the amelioration of living conditions among the poor, the adjustment of difficulties between labor and capital, the reduction of delinquency among the youth, and other problems the aim of our church-work. But such by-products of

the preaching of the Gospel as are specifically named in Holy Scripture might and should engage the attention of churches everywhere, especially under the social conditions which have been brought about in our country by the aftermath of the World War, the increasing mechanization of our civilization as a consequence of the industrial revolution, overproduction and high pressure salesmanship, the growing participation of women in industry and the professions, and other factors. Many of the present-day problems arising from these conditions must be considered by the churches of today if they desire to give full service to their own members and to others who may be in need of assistance.

What does this work *comprise*? As a matter of fact, it includes all systematic charitable endeavors such as Christians individually and congregations and groups of congregations have done heretofore in keeping with the Word of God. What the Lord says in Mark 14, 7: "Ye have the poor with you always, and whosoever ye will, ye may do them good," and when He enumerates some of the least of His brethren in Matt. 25, 35, 36, and what He implies in Matt. 10, 42: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward," has ever been taken by Christians for their guidance in taking care of the poor, the sick, the orphans, the aged and infirm. The institutions which have been erected and are being maintained by Christians, such as hospitals, children's homes, sanatoria, schools for the blind, for the deaf and dumb, for feeble-minded and epileptics, for old folks, bear witness of the fact that good works are being practised in keeping with the Word of God.

But social work does not confine itself to the relief of such as are in trouble. It has a wider field of activity, and prophylactic measures are employed by social workers quite as largely as remedial measures. Educational sociology sponsors the thesis that it is far better for society to have all its members, young and old, become well-integrated units in the social fabric than to carry out elaborate programs for the removal of maladjustments and the rehabilitation of social misfits. In other words, the former programs of indiscriminate giving and even of planned relief have been supplemented, and in part replaced, by a new objective, that of developing well-adjusted and integrated personalities. The prime function of the Church in this connection is to take care of the spiritual needs of men, to apply the means of grace, and to apply them properly to each individual case. Its program of education, however, need not be confined to the informational side alone, to the imparting of the truth of salvation. For it is clear that the ethical contents of the Holy Scriptures may be brought out in

a much more systematic fashion than that which is usually observed in catechumen classes dealing with the Ten Commandments and with the Third Article or in catechism sermons on the same parts of the Catechism or in the regular sermon series. Christian educational sociology is under obligation to teach and to make functional the correct Biblical information concerning man as a unit in the social order; concerning the family and all the problems connected with the home; concerning the state and government, property and inheritance, citizenship, trade, and industry; concerning the Church as the third *Stand* according to the ordinance of God; concerning the problems of rural communities and of the city (congestion and unhygienic living, drunkenness and drug addiction, sinful amusements, the social evil, poverty, crime, and other maladjustments). It is quite impossible to cover these and other topics in public preaching and teaching alone. In fact, in work of this type the emphasis on the way of salvation should always be paramount. But the needs of the situation may well be met by a full educational program in connection with the work of the various societies operating under the auspices of the congregation, such as the young people's society, the ladies' aid, the men's club, and other associations and guilds. This work should not be done in a sporadic and haphazard fashion but in a systematic manner, according to a well-defined and progressive plan. The topic plan adopted by the Walther League represents the best program of this type yet offered in our circles. One has but to consider the topics which are presented for discussion, such as: You and Your Education; You and Our Machine Age; The Unemployment Problem; Social Agencies; You and Your Newspaper; The Problem of Disease; The Problem of Crime; The Problem of Peace; You and Your Radio; You and the Movies; The Organization of Your Church; Your Church and Your Congregation; Inner Missions; Home Missions; Foreign Missions; Your Church Periodicals, and a score of other topics of equal importance, and one will realize that here is a program which will definitely build up the social consciousness of our people in keeping with the highest ethical standards of the Scriptures. There can be no doubt that the Church has the opportunity and the obligation to do its share in the field of Christian educational sociology.

What form will Christian social work in a Lutheran congregation take? One type has till now been used with universal approbation, namely, institutional work, sometimes in charge of an individual congregation, but more often carried on by an organization comprising a number of congregations, the association thus functioning under the auspices of the Church. Thus we have institutional work for children, for the aged, for the sick, for defectives, and we might have some for delinquents. If institutions

doing work of this type are not actually owned and operated by church organizations, congregations or pastors may obtain permission to do spiritual work in community or state institutions. With this may be combined some form of relief work, also holiday cheer and similar projects. There may even be some hospital social service under proper professional direction.

But there are possibilities for greater and better service in the field beyond the scope of the ordinary pastoral theology approach. In almost every congregation there are opportunities and needs for family welfare work, also known as family social-case work. This deals with social maladjustments connected with incompatibility of temper, unemployment, alcoholism, ill health, and sins against the Sixth Commandment. Most cases of this type require a delicate and tactful handling lest they precipitate a crisis. Then we have the types of social work which come under the heading of children's aid and protection, of psychiatric service, of probation and parole, of vocational guidance and personnel work. To this work, which is largely with individuals or with families, we must add the group work which deals with problems like the direction of leisure time and the development of efficient Christian citizens. This field alone is so comprehensive that it is commonly subdivided into sections pertaining to the optimum citizen, the domestically efficient person, the vocationally efficient person, and the physically efficient person. At first blush it may seem that these objectives are none of our concern; but if our Christian schools are to educate for life and if our various church societies are to serve as agencies in assisting to keep our members with their church and to become efficient and active members, it will be well for us to study late developments along these lines. Very frequently it will be found that the best way to accomplish some of the objectives referred to below will be to have the entire Lutheran community, under the auspices of the congregations, take charge of both the education and the practical application of the aims connected with Christian social work.

Nor is this all. In most communities, not only the urban but also the rural, various organizations exist which have some social work project as their objective. We have tuberculosis societies, provident associations, family welfare groups, boys' clubs and girls' clubs, big brother organizations, nurseries, clinics, associations for occupational therapy, park and playground associations, and scores of other societies. We are not concerned with those which operate under the auspices of some church or church organization. But we should be interested in all associations which are operating on a non-sectarian basis, possibly as state or municipal projects. There are definite and wonderful possibilities for some degree of cooperation with such organizations, in order to serve our un-

fortunate Lutheran brethren and others who may be in need of some assistance. It may be possible to make an arrangement by which a Lutheran worker is placed on the staff of some social-service organization, the salary being paid wholly or in part by a Lutheran organization and the work divided proportionately. Or the agency will be glad to put on Lutherans as part-time or volunteer workers. This is not a mingling of Church and State, but it is a way of carrying out the duties of a Christian citizenship.

It stands to reason that the Lutheran pastor will try to have as comprehensive a view of Christian social work as possible, so that he may give proper direction to any enterprise coming under this heading. It will be well to remember in this connection a few statements in an essay by Pastor V. Gloe, entitled "The Theory and Practise of Christian Social Work," read at the Detroit meeting (1936) of the Associated Lutheran Charities. He states, in part:

"Every pastor should seek to familiarize himself with the needs for Christian social work existing in his parish. Every congregation has its socially inadequate, its widows, its needy, its underprivileged, its unemployed, its handicapped, its mentally deficient, its delinquents, its alcoholics, its domestic maladjusted, etc. The house-going pastor soon discovers who these people are and what their problems are. . . . Give your congregation opportunity to express its love in the field of Christian social work.

"To help him understand the social needs of his people, every pastor should devote some time to the study of the social sciences. The Bible has much to say about social conditions and social relationships. A careful study of the Bible from the viewpoint of its social implications is therefore highly necessary. However, it is advisable that the pastor should also be a student of the social sciences. In every modern pastor's library there should be a few good books on economics, psychology, sociology, and social work. A little regular and systematic reading in these texts will give the pastor an understanding of fundamental economic, mental, and social processes, which in turn enable him better to understand the problems of his people."

P. E. KRETMANN



Approaches to Bible-Study in a Metropolitan Center

To many of our people the Bible is a closed book, not because of the difficulty of understanding it, but because the approaches to it, outside of the sermon, have always been rather ponderous and seemingly uninteresting. A fortunate impatience and natural rebellion against such an attitude has caused us to seek new approaches to Bible-study which would be thoroughly dignified and

truly enriching. The people who have found the way back to the Scriptures through these approaches have contributed to one of the most heartening experiences of a metropolitan ministry. We are not here in order to defend any specific method or suggest any special form — our interest is the Scriptures as God's Word and an approach to it that will make people realize its deathless strength and everlasting beauty.

We cannot join those who absolutely decry *the lecture method*. Our Monday evening adult Bible class is composed of more than fifty per cent. of that fine type of church-member who had all religious instruction in German and comes to the Bible class with a very outspoken desire to become acquainted with the English terminology in religion. It can hardly be demanded of some of these people, who are past fifty or sixty or are even seventy or eighty years, to fall in line with socialized recitation, such as the younger members of the group might do. For these people the Bible class becomes a restatement, in the language of the land and of their children, of the great truths which they learned in childhood and absorbed through years of German preaching. Their earnest desire to absorb the English terminology is usually born of the realization that they must be able to discuss the great truths of their salvation with the English-speaking members of their household and the neighbors round about them.

A second approach to the Scriptures which has proved most interesting is found in the developing of a regular project, either in a *group* or *privately*. The Walther League group, for instance, adopts the liturgy as its project for this year. That means that the Scriptural backgrounds of the liturgy are searched out and presented. The Leaguers in this way gain a great deal of information about the liturgy; but above all the most beautiful passages in both the Old and the New Testament are brought near to them. A study of the Common Service occupied six months. The Vesper is in its third month. The project continues until one discovers a genuine enrichment and a new appreciation of both the Bible and the liturgy.

Private projects are perhaps still more interesting. For several years the problem of the spiritual activity of some of the abler shut-ins weighed heavily on our soul. Finally, through a chance remark, we hit upon the idea of making them find the most comforting passages and asking them to read them to us. When we made a call, we no longer read them the great passages of comfort, but simply asked the question, "What passages have you found of particular comfort in the past days or weeks?" Needless to say, the first experience in each case was somewhat embarrassing. Because of the suddenness of the request, people paged back and

forth rather aimlessly and then, in desperation, began to read wherever they happened to be, with the result that in a list of twelve calls we listened to the genealogy of Christ according to St. Matthew twice. But that only happened the first time. The next time we made a call these people were more than ready for us. They had four, five, and sometimes even six passages or whole chapters that they were ready to read to us, and through five years the interest and the searching of these people has continued unabated. Of course, this must be attempted only with those who are physically able to put a half hour's work into the project daily. It has been such a great blessing, however, that we feel the idea worthy of imitation.

Another very successful project with individuals is one associated with the *hymn-book*. The pastor and the shut-in together decide on a hymn which is to be correlated with Scripture by the time of the next visit. Stanza for stanza and line for line these people search the Scriptures and mark down the references which they believe to be directly applicable. The results have been most amazing and revealing. Not only has this stimulated our own study and interest in hymnology, but it has also enriched the lives of many people by revealing to them the treasures contained in the great hymns of Christendom. The difficulty with this project is the work which it imposes on the *Seelsorger* himself. It means that he must know at least as much about these things as his searching, studying parishioner.

The *home devotional* type of study is also very interesting. In this type of work the weekly Bible class does not devote its time to the study of one single portion of Scripture, but a selection is made for every day in the week. These seven selections are then touched upon very briefly, and for each of them a set of questions is evolved, which the *Hausvater* is to answer. The class is conducted very frankly for the purpose of reestablishing the office of the *Hauspriester*, and the results, while they have not been great or many, have been very gratifying. The father who has been able to answer these questions by searching the Scriptures feels himself very secure in the knowledge that he is making a genuine endeavor to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In this connection we always encourage the reading of the Scriptures by the children in the household, the explanation given by the father, and the prayers which he offers. Surely no one will deny that the development of this project should be of inestimable value throughout our entire Church in the reestablishing of the family altar.

A combination of the *Bible Student* with the free *Lesson Helps* published by the Walther League also makes for a fine and easily

workable plan for research, even with older members of the group. If the members are assured that they have only to turn in their lessons in writing and that they will be carefully and confidentially reviewed and corrected by the pastor, they will not be so hesitant about joining in this type of work. The pastor must, however, be ready to examine each lesson leaflet turned in with chapter summaries very carefully; otherwise he will find that the people will soon lose interest.

Younger groups in Bible-study (for instance, informal meetings of the Junior Walther League) can sometimes be led into excellent research by *map study*. It is possible to secure outline maps of the Mediterranean World and Palestine quite easily, although ours were usually produced on the church's mimeograph. They were distributed, then a list of cities was mentioned which had to be placed in the map. After the cities had been more or less accurately located, certain outstanding journeys, such as the travels of Jesus, the journeys of St. Paul, and the missionary journeys of other apostles were traced. Scripture references were required for every city and for each activity.

The *biographical approach* has been used to such great profit that it is hardly necessary here to point out again what the editors of the *Bible Student* and the *Concordia Bible Student* have done in such an able way. Naturally we concentrate our attention first of all on the principal characters, many of whom are still vaguely familiar from Bible History classes; but sometimes character sketches and studies of minor characters can bring out just as much of Christian personality and worthy traits as some of those whom we call major figures. Particularly if we endeavor to place these great Bible characters into the world of today and the problems of today, do we realize their full greatness.

No true Lutheran pastor will deny the wisdom of strict *doctrinal study*. Reviews of the Catechism form very interesting classes for adults, although the approaches may have to be slightly different from those made with children. It requires mimeographing and careful work. For instance, we mimeograph all the Bible-passages of the Schwan edition, leaving the right-hand third of the page blank for notes. Asterisks denote the beginnings of new divisions and sections, although no numbers for passages and questions are given. Each section of these Bible-passages then becomes the object of special study. The group must analyze the passage in order to find out what it teaches and write it in the margin. Then the leader of the group can show how the statement of the Catechism fully coincides with the Scriptural teaching as the members of the group have discovered it in the passage. Excellent guides for this type of study are found in Koehler's *Annotated Catechism*.

and Kurth's *Catechetical Helps*. We have discovered that very often the conventional approach through the pages of the Catechism which our day-school children have used for seven years seems so familiar to them that they do not react with the anticipated interest to the teaching in the confirmation class. Where this lack of interest seems to be found, an approach of this kind may prove very interesting and profitable, because it forces the children who are already familiar with the statements of the Catechism to get at them from a new angle.

Young people's groups in particular are interested in the *problem method*. This is an excellent way of arousing interest in missions and in the study of comparative religion. The problem for one evening will be the "regaining of one who has developed inclinations towards Christian Science." What arguments can the group present against Christian Science? What does Christian Science teach that is definitely opposed to the Scriptures? What are the historical backgrounds of Christian Science? etc. In this manner one may take up the problems of all the denominations round about us as well as the problem of work in foreign fields. Books, such as Fleming's *Contacts with Non-Christian Cultures*, Monson's *The Difference*, Mueller's *My Church and Others*, Burrows's *Founders of Great Religions*, Lankenau's *The World Is Our Field*, Eldridge's *Christianity's Contribution to Civilization*, etc., will prove valuable helps. The problems of atheism and evolution may also be dealt with in a very similar fashion with the help and guidance of Dr. Th. Graebner's excellent work in these fields, as well as *The Case against Evolution*, by Barry O'Toole; *God or Gorilla*, by Alfred McCann; *After Its Kind*, and *The Deluge Story in Stone*, by Byron C. Nelson. If the problem happens to be one in the American mode of living, the rearing of children, religious education, reading, etc., books such as Woodward's *Relations of Religious Training to Adult Religious Life* and Lynd's *Middletown* will be very valuable.

Bible-study through pictures is a field which is very frequently left entirely to the primary grades, and still it is a fact that some of the greatest masterpieces in the world can be comprehended and understood only by the adult mind. A Bible-class room ought to have very carefully selected pictures, which are changed regularly, and during the great seasons of the church-year, such as Christmas, Lent, etc., the great pictures centering around the Savior's life ought to be displayed. It would take years to collect these pictures; but slide-lectures will help to bring them to our churches most quickly. Every pastor ought to be familiar with Bailey's *The Use of Art in Religious Education*, with John La Farge's *The Gospel Story in Art*, and with Bailey's *The Gospel in Art*. The wonderful

hints for teaching and preaching that can be gained from these books will be of inestimable value. Branch's two volumes, *Sermons on Great Paintings* and *Christ's Ministry and Passion in Art*, are also very fine helps, even though we would not call them sermons in the strictest sense of the word. Allied with this type of study is the *poster work* with Juniors. Several of the more gifted members of the group are selected to make posters to announce the following week's Bible class or even for several weeks in advance. The next lesson will be, "St. Paul's Preaching with Reference to the Altar of the Unknown God." Now the Junior must find that lesson, study the circumstances and the background and, with the simplicity which must characterize a poster, give an indication of Mars Hill, a few pillars to designate the temple, a square block for the altar, and possibly, if it is very good, the figure of a preaching man. The results of this type of work have been most amazing and have uncovered so many original approaches that one feels amply repaid for the many hours of work and the special guidance which must go into it.

Last, but certainly not of least importance, is the type of Bible-study which leads people more deeply into the *study of prayer*. We speak about prayer a great deal, but we fear that very often our people do not understand what we mean when we talk of more earnest prayer and intercession. Our Church with its fine liturgical prayers and forms has not tended to develop a laity well informed and instructed in the manner of *proper ex-corde* prayer. We fear that often our injunctions to prayer only confuse our people because for them prayer means nothing more than the pouring of words into molds formed early in childhood and preserved to this day. But surely prayer ought to mean more than that for our people. They ought to be familiar with the outline of a true prayer and in that way build themselves up in this grace and virtue continually. The best time to develop this is undoubtedly in the confirmation class under the leadership of the pastor. There the children can be taught what every true prayer must contain. A course of prayer study in the Bible class is used to examine the great prayers of Scripture and show how certain essentials are always found in them. It will teach the proper processes of meditation on Scripture-passages so that people will finally be able to translate into prayers of thanksgiving and petition the great truths and revelations of Scripture. This type of study will be of greatest benefit to the pastor himself because he certainly needs to develop more and more each day the grace of prayer by which God would bestow upon him and his flock the richest blessings. Books such as Lunn's *The Secret of the Saints*, Oxenhan and Dunkerley's *First Prayers for Children* and Fleming's *The Dynamic of All Prayer* will be

found valuable guides and helps, although they are entirely sectarian in their approaches. It would surely be a desirable and worthy thing if we could have a book in this same field, written with a truly Lutheran background.

The above approaches to the problem of Bible-study are only a few chosen out of an almost endless variety. The devoted pastor, in his earnest desire to reach out and bring the blessed Word close to the hearts of every member of his flock, will surely find many more ways that will meet the needs of his individual group even more closely and more thoroughly than those presented in such a brief form and condensed manner in this place. The leaders of our young people in particular will search for ever more attractive ways of presenting the precious, inspired Word to the hearts of those groups committed to their charge. Truly, no effort on our part can be too great in order that these young people may be developed into consciously redeemed moral agents and interested searchers for the way of life in the Book of God. The contributions which are made in this field for the broadening of the vision of our young people on the basis of the Word of God and its view of the world and our place in it are among the most lasting and surely the most worthy which it is given to poor sinful man to make for the kingdom of God and our blessed Savior.

Chicago, Ill.

A. R. KRETZMANN

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What can Synod Do in Order that There Be More Uniformity in the Externals of Our Public Service?

Published by Request of a Pastoral Conference

Not only has the lack of uniformity been lamented for the past fifty years, especially since the majority of our congregations have regular English services, but of late, through the revival of the study of liturgies in every section of the Christian Church, there have appeared definite symptoms which seem to indicate that just when we were about to be led out of the wilderness of liturgical confusion, we are to be led back into a new liturgical chaos.

We propose to set forth four principles:

1. Liturgy belongs to the realm of adiaphora.
2. Changes in liturgy may cease to be adiaphora.
3. Uniformity in liturgy is most desirable.
4. When changes in liturgy are introduced, these should be made a) without thoughtlessness, b) without offense.

1. Ceremonies and Liturgy Belong to the Field of Adiaphora

The Augsburg Confession, Art. VII, says that uniformity in ceremonies is not necessary to ecclesiastical unity: "Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike."

Formula of Concord, *Epitome*, Art. X, § 2: "We believe, teach, and confess that the congregation of God in every place and every time has the power, according to circumstances, to change such ceremonies in such manner as may be most useful and edifying to the congregation of God."

Formula of Concord, *Solida Declaratio*, Art. X, § 9: "We believe, teach, and confess that the congregation of God of every place and every time has the good right, power, and authority [in matters truly adiaphora] to change, to diminish, and to increase them [i. e., ceremonies], without thoughtlessness and offense, in an orderly and becoming way."

Formula of Concord, *Epitome*, Art. X, § 5: "We believe, teach, and confess that no church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other, if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine."

And Luther, in his *Deutsche Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes*, wrote in 1526: "Above all things do I want to request all those in a very friendly manner, also for God's sake, who see this order in the services or care to follow it that they do not make a necessary law of it and thereby ensnare or entrap any one's conscience, but to use it according to their Christian liberty and good pleasure how, where, when, and as long as, the occasion may offer or require it." (Vol. X, col. 226.)

2. Changes in the Liturgy may Cease to Be a Matter of Indifference

Formula of Concord, *Solida Declaratio*, Art. X, § 10: "We believe, teach, and confess also that at the time of confession [when a confession of heavenly truth is required], when the enemies of God's Word desire to suppress the pure doctrine of the holy Gospel, the entire congregation of God, yea, every Christian, but especially ministers of the Word, as the leaders of the congregation of God, are bound by God's Word to confess freely and openly the [godly] doctrine . . . and that then, in this case, even in such [things truly and of themselves] adiaphora, *they must not yield to the adversaries* or permit these [adiaphora] to be forced upon them by their enemies." In the days of Paul the Apostle circumcision had become an adiaphoron, which at other occasions was observed by Paul; yet when the false teachers urged circumcision, claiming that it was necessary unto righteousness, Paul refused to yield. He

wrote Gal. 5: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free."

Formula of Concord, *Solida Declaratio*, Art. X, §§ 28, 29: "We reject and condemn also as wrong the opinion of those who hold that at a time of persecution we may comply with the enemies of the holy Gospel in [restoring] such adiaphora or come to an agreement with them. We likewise regard it as a sin that deserves to be rebuked when in time of persecution anything is done either in indifferent matters or in doctrine, and in what otherwise pertains to religion, for the sake of the enemies of the Gospel, in word or act, contrary and opposed to the Christian confession."

Certain rites and ceremonies may through usage have become the symbol of a definite doctrine. We speak of *Bekenntniszeremonien*, and rightly so. To baptize by immersion instead of by sprinkling certainly is an adiaphoron; to break the bread in the Holy Communion, to ask the communicant to take the cup and place it to his lips instead of the celebrant's placing the cup to his lips; to use the *Spendeformel*: "Take, eat; this is the true body, this is the true blood," etc., or to say: "Christ says: 'Take, eat,' etc., 'drink ye all of it,'" these are matters of indifference. But there have been occasions when the omitting of certain rites or the introduction of new ones would cease to be an adiaphoron.

3. Uniformity in Liturgy Is Most Desirable

In the Synodical Report of the Wisconsin District, 1910, p. 24, we read: "Wenn auch jede Gemeinde Recht und Befugnis hat, ihre eigene Weise und Form des Gottesdienstes zu haben, so wird doch viel dafuer sprechen, dass Gemeinden *eines* Bekenntnisses ihre Zusammengehörigkeit durch moeglichst gleichfoermige Gottesdienstordnung zum Ausdruck bringen, trotzdem, wie unser Bekenntnis betont, Gleichfoermigkeit der Zeremonien nicht zur wahren Einigkeit noetig ist."

Nicolaus Hausmann appealed to Luther in 1526 to compile a liturgy to be used in all the churches. Luther answered that he was too busy, but wrote: "Wollte doch Gott, dass Du eine Form entwuerfest und an mich schicktest!" These words certainly show that Luther saw the great need of uniformity in liturgy; for he says: "Wollte doch Gott!"

Yes, it is true, every congregation has authority to have its own form of service. Yet we believe that the words of Paul, which apply to every individual Christian, certainly apply also to every Christian congregation: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient," 1 Cor. 6, 12. Certainly no individual congregation would set aside usages, customs, or portions of the liturgy long established and replace them with new customs, rites,

and ceremonies, entirely irrespective of, and without consideration of, its sister congregations. Uniformity is most desirable in order that, to quote Luther again, Vol. X, 261, "the unity of the Christian people may be affirmed also by such externals as are not necessary in themselves." He maintains that by lack of uniformity "people are perplexed and displeased." Indeed, in view of the liturgical confusion in his day Luther was bold enough to write as follows: "Wherever it happens that people become offended or perplexed by such a manifold usage, we are *certainly in duty bound* [note these words] to limit our liberty and as much as possible to do all we can that the people may be bettered by us and not offended. Since these external orders are of no consequence to our conscience before God and yet may be of benefit to our neighbor, we should charitably endeavor, as St. Paul teaches, to be of one mind and, as well as this can be done, have similar rites and ceremonies." (Vol. X, 226.)

And precise as our confessions are in defending the right of the congregation to have its own liturgy, they are nevertheless outspoken on the other point, the desirability of uniformity, saying: "It is pleasing to us that for the sake of unity and order universal rites are observed." Many a story might be here related how the lack of uniformity has disturbed Christians and how today in many a congregation there are liturgical monstrosities which grate on one's nerves and certainly contribute nothing to the edifying of the worshipers. It seems to us that it is high time that everywhere everybody and especially the pastors earnestly strive for, and work towards, a uniform liturgy. By the same token alterations in, omissions of, and additions to, the liturgy should be considered most carefully, and unless convincing reasons dictate and demand a change, they ought not to be made.

We now come to the final principle:

4. Changes in Liturgy Should be Made a) without Thoughtlessness (absque Levitate, ohne Leichtfertigkeit); b) without Offense (absque Scandalo, ohne Aergernis)

(Cf. F. C., Art. X, § 9)

It may well be asked whether those who have held that it is the right and privilege of congregations to make changes in the liturgy and have quoted the Lutheran Confessions in support of their position have not read the Confessions a bit hastily or have overlooked certain statements. Explicit as the Confessions are in safeguarding the right of the Christian congregation, they are just as explicit in limiting that right, and they mention most emphatically the bounds within which it should be done. Let us read just one such statement: "*Therefore, we believe, teach, and confess that*

the congregation of God of every place and every time has, according to its circumstances, the good right, power, and authority [in matters truly adiaphora] to change, to diminish, and to increase them"; but now come these significant words, which plainly set a limitation: "*Without thoughtlessness and offense, in an orderly and becoming way, as at any time it may be regarded most profitable, most beneficial, and best for [preserving] good order, Christian discipline, and the edification of the Church*"; in the German translation: "*dieselben ohne Leichtfertigkeit und Aergernis ordentlicher- und gebuehrlicherweise zu mindern und zu mehren*"; in the Latin: "*si tamen id absque levitate et scandalo decenter et bono ordine fiat.*" (Formula of Concord, *Sol. Decl.*, Art. X, § 9.) Have not these significant words at times been overlooked? Must these words not induce a pastor and his congregation to hesitate and to deliberate before a change in the liturgy of any importance at all is introduced?

When would a congregation violate the principle here enunciated, "*without thoughtlessness*"? When by such changes the doctrines of the Church are in no way given a clearer expression, when by such changes concessions are made to error, or when the impression is created that these changes are merely being made because such a congregation had sacrificed a definite doctrine and yet the changes are introduced, then it is done thoughtlessly.

When does a congregation considering the introduction of changes in the externals of its worship do it "*without offense*"? When all Christians, even those weak in faith or in Christian knowledge, while they are not convinced that the proposed changes are for the edification of the Church, yet see no harm in them; when by such changes no one within the congregation is induced to have suspicions regarding its doctrinal stand. As long as even the slightest danger exists of offending a brother, such changes should not be introduced; for in the same paragraph (9), Art. X, we read: "*Moreover, how we can yield and give way with a good conscience to the weak in faith in such external adiaphora Paul teaches Rom. 14 and proves it by his example, Acts 16, 3; 21, 26; 1 Cor. 9, 19.*" These words seem to us to be a plea for caution and consideration even though many convincing reasons would seem to make changes desirable.

Let us make the application: The Formula of Concord certainly permits, even encourages, pastors and congregations to acquaint themselves with the rites, customs, and liturgies that have been in use in the Christian Church during the past centuries. It commends the efforts of those within our Synodical Conference who have made it a hobby to delve into the field of liturgics, in the hope that much that is good in the field of liturgics, but is now dis-

carded or out of use might be resurrected and eventually adopted by our congregations for the edification of the Church, that is, for a better expression of the Church's doctrines and confessions. But it does not commend, no, it passes judgment upon, those who, when convinced in their own minds that such customs and rites, fallen into disuse, are an improvement, adopt them forthwith. Granting, for the sake of argument, that the familiar pulpit gown worn by 90 per cent. of our pastors is not even Lutheran, but Genevan; granting that the Gregorian chants were those used by the Church for centuries; granting that Luther wore the cassock, surplice, stole; granting that it is typically Lutheran to elevate the host, to break it, to self-commune; granting that celebrating the Holy Communion under the setting, custom, and rites of the ancient Church contributes to a greater solemnity and a higher regard for the Lord's Sacrament; yet when these customs, rites, and ceremonies, while strictly churchly and Lutheran, have not been in use in our Church for nearly a hundred years, are introduced, it is violating the spirit and the letter of our Confessions. In CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY Dr. Fuerbringer wrote in 1934 a series of articles on "Die rechte Mitte in der Liturgie und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes," which deserves being read by every Lutheran pastor. On page 424 he says, in speaking of vestments: "Nachdem diese Gewaender meistens gefallen sind und die lutherische Kirche Amerikas jahrhundertelang ohne sie bestanden hat, waehrend andererseits die roemische Kirche ihr Gepraenge und ihren Missbrauch damit fortsetzt, wird man es sich wohl ueberlegen, ehe man die hergebrachte Amtskleidung ablegt und durch eine andere ersetzt und dabei Gefahr laeuft, die Aufmerksamkeit auf etwas Aeußerliches zu lenken. Und wenn man bedenkt, was insonderheit die Casula fuer eine Bedeutung in der roemischen Kirche hat, wird gesunde [note that word] lutherische Ueberzeugung jeden abhalten, sie wieder einzufuehren."

And now we venture also to give an answer to the question: Can Synod not do something in order that there be greater uniformity also in the externals of worship? Our answer is: Yes, it can. It can encourage the study of liturgics. It can appoint a committee which shall acquaint itself with every phase of liturgics, past and present, with instructions to submit its findings to Synod and through Synod to every congregation for adoption. It can, through its officials, in public and in private, remind pastors and congregations how desirable uniformity in the externals of worship is and that therefore changes in the liturgy should not be made thoughtlessly and without giving consideration to other congregations. It can through its Visitors approach individual pastors who either have made, or are considering, such changes which amount to a

radical departure from those now generally in use and read to them § 9 of Article X from the Formula of Concord; it can resolve that every District President instruct his respective Visitors to impress upon every pastor the second and third questions of the ordination vow, which read: "Dost thou hold and profess the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as laid down in the Book of Concord of 1580 to be the true doctrine of the Holy Scriptures?" to which the answer was given: "I do so hold and profess."

"Art thou determined to discharge faithfully the duties of the holy ministry in this congregation in full accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the said Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church?" Answer: "I have so determined by the grace of God."

More than this Synod *cannot* do. Less it *ought* not to do.

St. Paul, Minn.

—♦♦♦—
F. J. SELTZ

Sermon Study on Heb. 12, 18-24

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity — Eisenach Selections

In keeping with the general purpose of this letter the author exhorts his readers to remain steadfast in spite of all temptations to disloyalty and apostasy and to strive after patience, brotherly love, and holiness lest like Esau they sell their birthright, only to rue it too late, chap. 12, 1-17. For the New Testament covenant into which they have entered far exceeds in excellency the Old Testament covenant, vv. 18-24. If, therefore, they reject this covenant, they shall repent too late on the day when the New Testament kingdom alone remains, while all other things, those things which they preferred to the immovable kingdom, shall be removed finally and forever, vv. 25-29. Hence our text, though thoroughly didactic, serves a very practical purpose. This practical viewpoint shall determine our treatment of this beautiful passage.

Vv. 18. 19. Very vividly the author describes the unique manifestation of God's majestic holiness on Mount Sinai. So thoroughly is his mind imbued with the phraseology of the Pentateuch that he reproduces the very words which Moses uses in his various records of this awesome scene, Ex. 19; Deut. 4, 10-13; 5, 4-27. Moses had been told to sanctify the people, so that they would be ready to meet the Lord on the third day. In the early morning of that day the manifestation of God's majesty began, Ex. 19, 16. That was the signal that Israel was to appear before God, Ex. 19, 13. Hence we read: Ex. 19, 17-19; Deut. 4, 11-13. Coming out of the camp into the open, Israel saw Mount Sinai towering before them, the whole mountain burning with fire, the flames shooting up to the very heart of heaven, Deut. 4, 11 (marginal reading). And

they saw "blackness and darkness," ominous clouds, foreboding evil, threatening destruction, casting their inky shadows and sober gloom over all the landscape and into the very hearts of all the people. Ever denser grew the darkness which covered mountain and plain, illuminated only by the ghastly glare of almost incessant flashes of lightning, leaping from crag to crag, from earth to sky, and from sky back to the earth, while incessantly peals of thunder rolled, reechoing from the mountainside. The people heard the howling of the tempest, the roaring of a great hurricane. To add to their consternation, there was heard the sound of a trumpet, a trumpet-call shrill, piercing, penetrating their very marrow. It ushers in an even more awe-inspiring manifestation of God's majesty. Far above the roaring of the flames of fire, the crashing of the thunder, above the din and the tumult of the shrieking tempest, above that dreadful sound of the trumpet, there was heard a voice surpassing in strength and volume the mighty roar of the unleashed elements. Nor was it merely an inarticulate voice, a shrieking or screaming as of some wild animal. It was a *voice of words*, of connected speech, each word carrying a distinct meaning, each word clearly intelligible to them and understood by them. The phrase "voice of words" is taken from the Septuagint version of Deut. 4, 12. From Deut. 4, 13 we learn that these words were God's declaration of His covenant unto Israel, which He commanded Israel to perform, even the Ten Commandments. Cp. also Ex. 34, 28. The contents of these words were indeed of a nature to strike fear and terror, abject fright, overwhelming panic, into hearts already cowed with fear because of the mighty manifestation of God's majesty in nature. The people heard the words of God, but far from rejoicing at His message, far from desiring to hear more, they rather pleaded that *the word should not be spoken to them any more*, literally, that not should be added to them a word, *for they could not endure that which was commanded*. The very promulgation of the Law showed the utter futility of any hope of obtaining salvation on the basis of the Law. The yoke imposed upon them seemed indeed unbearable for sinful, mortal beings. Cp. Acts 15, 10. We need but read the solemn words as proclaimed from the summit of Mount Sinai, especially the awful threats of death and eternal damnation pronounced against every transgressor of these words, and we shall realize that indeed it is impossible to obtain salvation through this covenant promulgated from Sinai, that it must strike fear, terror, despair, into the heart of every human being. The unrelenting sternness of the commandments of God, the universality of their obligation, the severity of punishment which would unfailingly follow every transgression of God's will, became especially apparent from the command which

is only partly quoted by the writer of this epistle, v. 20, which really included both man and beast. Cp. Ex. 19, 12, 13. On pain of death no one dared touch the mountain beyond the barrier erected. Whether that touching had been committed in open and flagrant violation of God's will or unintentionally, unwittingly,— inexorably he was to be put to death. Even if a beast, unreasoning animal though it was, would touch the mountain, death by stoning or shooting was to be its inescapable fate. If even beasts were held responsible, how could man escape his doom? If even so slight a mistake as touching the side of a mountain was to be visited by death, what awful penalties must be in store for those who failed to confirm the words of this Law to do them! And—so terrible was the sight—Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake," v. 21. This punctuation is said to have originated with Beza and obviates the necessity of supplying "that." The Old Testament does not tell us that Moses on this occasion feared and trembled. Yet the silence of Scripture on the fear and trembling of Moses on the occasion of the giving of the Law does not warrant the assumption that the author confused the two occasions related Ex. 19 and Deut. 9, 19. He may have gained the information by direct inspiration, or he may have followed a tradition, as Stephen, Acts 7, 32, undoubtedly did. In both instances the Holy Spirit stamps these traditions as true.

Such was the nature, the revelation, the effect, of the covenant to which Israel had come, into which it had entered at Mount Sinai. For though Israel had fled in terror, though the people had pleaded with Moses that they be excused from having anything further spoken to them, vv. 19, 20; cp. Ex. 20, 19; Deut. 5, 23—27; 18, 16, yet, encouraged by Moses, Ex. 20, 20, they finally pledged allegiance to this covenant, Ex. 24, 3, 7. Undoubtedly Moses had told them of God's promise that another Prophet, with a different message, would be sent, which promise God had given to Moses at this time, Deut. 18, 15—19. Emboldened by this Gospel promise, trusting in that blood of sprinkling, Ex. 24, 6—8, which typified the blood of the New Covenant to be shed by the promised Messiah and whose cleansing power was retroactive, they entered into the covenant established by God, Heb. 9, 15. Without this promise of a better covenant, Heb. 7, 19, 22; 8, 6 ff., the Old Covenant would have held forth no hope and comfort; for it demanded perfection from men that were not, and could not be, perfect.

The apostle tells his readers that they had *not come unto the mount that might be touched*, etc. Note that the word translated "that might be touched" *ψηλαφώμενος* (literally, "is being touched," hence touchable, tangible) is the present participle, while the word "burning" is the perfect participle. Sinai still is touchable, but it

is no longer burning with fire. Most manuscripts omit "mountain." In this case it would not be permissible to translate "to a touchable and burning fire," as some do; for the fire could not be touched, cp. Ex. 19, 12 ff.; but *πνοι* would be like in Deut. 4, 11, which passage is evidently in the mind of the writer, the instrumental dative and the correct translation would seem to be: Ye are not come to something tangible and burning with fire. Note the absence of the articles throughout the enumeration of the particulars in which the two covenants differ, vv. 18-24. The author evidently intends to stress the *qualitative*, descriptive, characterizing force of these nouns. They did not enter a covenant which has to do with tangible, visible, material, external matters; not to a covenant characterized by such terrifying manifestations of God's majesty as accompanied the establishment of Sinai's covenant; not to a covenant which demands, and threatens, and accuses, and condemns, and points out no hope of escaping its dreadful curse except by perfect obedience to its every detail; not to a covenant which gives neither strength nor willingness to fulfil its demands, which rouses only antagonism and despair. Such is not the nature of the covenant into which the believers of the New Testament have entered, as the writer now proceeds to show.

Vv. 22-24. The author enumerates a number of glorious prerogatives and assures his readers that they *are come* to a realization of every one of them. No longer are they looking forward to their arrival at Zion; they *have arrived* in the city of God. No longer does the enjoyment of these glories lie in the dim and distant future; they *are come* into the possession and fruition of all these privileges. *Unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God.* These two items (note the *xai*, which in this entire passage connects the various items) denote the Church of God on earth and in heaven, which consists of the "Church of the firstborn" and "the spirits of just men made perfect," v. 23. That Church is called Mount Zion since it is the place of God's revelation; it is called Jerusalem because there God lives with His own and they with Him. Very significantly the author places "Zion" before "mount," while in the 23 passages in the Septuagint whenever the two words are combined, the order is uniformly *δρος Σιων*. (Vaughan, cited in *Expositor's Greek New Testament*.) The writer did not wish to call attention to the fact that both Sinai and Zion were mountains, but that there was a radical difference in the symbolical nature of these two mountains, that they had not approached a Sinai but a Zion. Not Sinai but Zion determined the character of the covenant which they had entered. Sinai represents the covenant of the Law; cp. Gal. 4, 24, 25. Zion symbolizes the covenant of the Gospel. With its two summits it formed the eastern part of Jerusa-

lem. The southern, lower, summit was called the City of David, while the higher, northern peak, also called Moriah, was the site of the Temple. Because of this Temple, Zion and Jerusalem are called the dwelling of God, Ps. 9, 11; 135, 21. Out of Zion was to come salvation, Ps. 14, 7; Rom. 11, 26; out of Zion the Lord blesses, Ps. 128, 5; out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of God out of Jerusalem, Is. 2, 3; cp. Luke 24, 47. On Zion, God revealed Himself in His Temple and graciously granted reconciliation and atonement by the sacrificial blood of animals, Lev. 1, 4, 9, typifying the blood of Jesus, 1 Pet. 1, 19. To such a Zion all Christians have come. Not to that physical, material Mount Zion forming a part of visible Jerusalem; no, they are come to a Zion mount which in contrast to Sinai brought them all those privileges and honors which Sinai promised to its covenant-keepers, but which it could not bestow since there were no perfect keepers of the covenant. They have come to a Zion mount which grants all those blessings flowing from Mount Zion of old, not, however, merely in hope of a future redemption, but in the knowledge of salvation accomplished and in a measure far exceeding the fondest hopes of the believer of the Old Testament. Moreover, *xāi*, they are come to a city in which God, the living God, the Author and Fountainhead of life and salvation, dwells in the fulness of His glorious grace, Eph. 2, 21, 22; 1 Cor. 3, 17; Rev. 21, 3. They have approached, and are now residents of, that *heavenly* Jerusalem, that Jerusalem which is above, Gal. 4, 26. The author adds this remark to render impossible any misunderstanding, as though after all he had in mind the visible, physical Jerusalem. He speaks of that invisible, spiritual, Heaven-born Jerusalem, the Church of God, a heaven on earth, unseen by the eye of man, yet a reality, the true, abiding, everlasting home and Father's house of all believers; a heavenly city outlasting the earthly Jerusalem; its spiritual glory even on earth transcending that of Jerusalem in the acme of its splendor; reflecting that fulness of its perfection which shall be revealed on yonder day, Rev. 21, 1 ff. No need to wait for a millennium; no need to hope and pray for that day to come when we shall pass through the gates of a visible Jerusalem on earth. That day will never come; and, thank God, we need not long for such a day. We are recipients of far greater grace and glory. We are in Zion, in Jerusalem, in the city of the living God. All those promises connected in the word of prophecy with coming to Zion and Jerusalem are being fulfilled, literally fulfilled, in that spiritual Zion, in that heavenly Jerusalem, the Church of Christ, to which we have come, whose glories, though not yet revealed in their full perfection, we now and here on this earth taste and see and enjoy.

And to an innumerable company of angels, to the general as-

sembly. The construction of these words is disputed. The Authorized Version connects the last words (to the general assembly) with "and the Church," referring both πανηγύρει and καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ to the congregation of saints. Since, however, καὶ in this entire passage serves to introduce a new particular and every new member is so introduced, it would seem better to place the comma after πανηγύρει and begin the new member with "and the Church," etc. Others regard v. 23 a as an apposition to *angels*, v. 22. But nowhere in Scripture are angels called first-born, nor are we ever told that their names are written in heaven. Still others place the comma after πανηγύρει and translate "to myriads of angels, a festal assembly" or to "Myriads, an innumerable host, of angels, a festal assembly." We prefer the latter construction. Μυριάδες is used in exactly the same manner in the Septuagint translation of Deut. 32, 2, where only in the next clause angels are mentioned: "The Lord came from Sinai . . . with myriads to Kadesh, to the right of Him angels with Him." This passage may have been in the mind of the author. Cp. also the Septuagint translation of Dan. 7, 10, where the word *myriads* is used without any determining addition. Angels had assisted at the establishment of the first covenant, cp. Deut. 33, 2, 3; Ps. 68, 18 (the coming of God to Zion and accompanied by myriads of angels, vv. 16, 17, is compared to His coming to Sinai, v. 18); Acts 7, 53; Gal. 3, 19; Heb. 2, 2. On Sinai these myriads added to the solemnity of the occasion, though invisible to Israel (or were those fiery flames and lightnings angels? Cp. Ps. 104, 4); they were witnesses praising the majesty of God, the Lawgiver, extolling His justice and righteousness. In Zion, the New Testament Church, these myriads are a festal assembly, jubilantly proclaiming the praises of the God of salvation. The mysteries of God's salvation, into which with holy rapture they desire to look, 1 Pet. 1, 12, furnish to them the ever-recurring theme of their glad hymns of praise. Cp. Luke 2, 13, 14; Rev. 5, 11, 12; 7, 11, 12; 11, 15; 12, 10. What a blessed privilege to have come to this festal assembly of angels! What an honor that, while still living on this earth, we are in the company of heaven's angels, surrounded by those spirits from the throne of God, voicing forth His praises, Ps. 103, 20, forever beholding His face, enjoying the bliss of His presence, praising God, who has made it possible for fallen mankind to share this bliss with them, gladly ministering to them during their sojourn on earth, rejoicingly carrying their redeemed souls to heaven. To the festal company of this innumerable host are we come. What an exalted dignity!

Having raised his eyes to heaven, the writer now scans the earth and there sees other myriads of highly honored creatures to whom we are come, *the Church of the first-born which are written*

in heaven. In the Old Testament covenant the children of God were minors, Gal. 4, 1-3; in the New Testament all believers are not only come of age, Gal. 4, 4-7, they are first-born, all of them. In the Old Testament the first-born received special privileges, Ex. 13, 2, being sanctified to the Lord for the reason given Ex. 13, 15; cp. Num. 3, 12, 13. While in the Old Testament covenant such a distinction was made by God Himself, in the New Testament all the members of the Church are first-born; there is none inferior as to power and government; all are kings before God, 1 Pet. 2, 9; 1 Cor. 3, 21 ff.; Gal. 3, 28; all have equal privileges; to all belong the keys, Matt. 18, 18; John 20, 23; all have received a double portion, immeasurable bounties of God's grace and loving-kindness, John 1, 16; cp. Eph. 3, 8, 16-20; 1 Cor. 1, 5; 2 Cor. 1, 5. Their names are "written in heaven," enrolled in the books of heaven as citizens of that kingdom which fadeth not away. Their citizenship is in heaven, though they are still on earth, Phil. 3, 20; cp. Ex. 32, 32; Is. 4, 3; Phil. 4, 3; Rev. 3, 5; 13, 8; 20, 15. What God tells the whole Church, Is. 49, 14-16, is here stated of every individual. How can He neglect, how can He forsake, those whose names He Himself has enrolled in heaven? What vistas of glory open before our astonished eyes as we read these words! Cp. Rom. 8, 28-39.

To God, the Judge of all, rather, to a Judge, the God of all. Since the apostle shows in this entire passage the prerogatives of the New Testament Christians, we regard this clause also as Gospel, not Law. They have come to a Judge, the God of all; who is not a mere man, wearing away like Moses under the heavy burden of judging all men, Ex. 18, 18; not a mere man, whose knowledge is limited, whose penetration may be dulled by over-work, whose judgment may not always be correct and fair. He is God, the omniscient Searcher of hearts, who can see that faith dwelling in the hearts of His own, which makes them His children in spite of all their failings. He is the God of all, of all men, to be sure, but especially of all believers, 1 Tim. 4, 10. How often does God promise that He will be the God of His people! Gen. 17, 8; Lev. 26, 11, 12; Jer. 24, 7; 31, 33; Ezek. 11, 20; 37, 27; Zech. 8, 8. That is to be the highest privilege of the redeemed in heaven, Rev. 21, 3; the object of the believers' fervent prayer, Ex. 33, 18; Ps. 63, 1, 2; 73, 25, 26. This God is their Judge, this God who is *their* God, who loves them all, who has found ways and means to remain the Just One and still to justify the ungodly. Why tremble at the thought of Judgment if our Judge is that God of all who has written our names in heaven? We *are* come to a Judge. Already we have appeared before Him, and, lo, the Judge is none other than He who has already from eternity chosen us, who has justified us through faith, whose Word, whose judgment, whose sentence,

shall not change nor pass away, Luke 22, 33; Rom. 8, 31 ff. Why doubt His Word since so many already have entered into His presence? For we are come to the spirits of just men made perfect. While the Old Covenant could not make perfect, Heb. 9, 6—10; 10, 1, 11, ours is a covenant that gives perfection and has already given it to untold thousands. There are just men who are already perfected. The writer is thinking of course of all the departed saints of the Old and New Testaments. While on earth, they were righteous, just, δίκαιοι, such as they ought to be, accepted by God as fulfillers of His Law, for Christ's sake (Is. 45, 24) of course. No longer are they in this world; they are spirits, their bodies decaying, perhaps long decayed. Yet they have lost nothing; they have only gained, Phil. 1, 21. Having departed in peace, Luke 2, 29, they are now with Christ, Phil. 1, 23, in perfection, their souls are enjoying that perfection of bliss which shall be granted to their bodies also on the day of resurrection, Rev. 14, 13. To these spirits the believers have come; for the Church of God is the communion of saints on earth and in heaven. Hymn 463. Believers are one body, one soul, and one spirit with the just men made perfect. Why should any doubt of their own ultimate salvation harass them? From the dust of the earth, from its temptations and vexations, lift up your eyes and behold the spirits of perfected ones. Like you they were flesh and blood, like you subject to the same trials. They have arrived at the place of perfection, Rev. 7, 14—17. Take courage. Remain faithful, Rom. 8, 35—37. Hymn 335. Cling to Him to whom they clung, on whose account they were adjudged righteous, by whose almighty grace they were perfected. To Him and to His blood the writer finally calls the attention of his readers in a fitting climax.

And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of the sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel, v. 24. We shall follow the order of the Greek text. "Of a covenant." Διαθήκη means properly an arrangement, a disposition of any matter, used of the last disposition of one's affairs in his testament; so Gal. 3, 15. Then it is used of any covenant or compact, so of the Old Testament covenant about 280 times in the Septuagint in translation of תְּבִרְךָ. In Heb. 9, 15—17 these two meanings of the word are evidently combined, this passage showing how suitable the word διαθήκη is for the idea to be expressed, the covenant of God made with His people in the Old and New Testaments. It is a covenant resting on promises which would come into effect at the death of the Testator, Jesus Christ. Already the spiritual covenant of the Old Testament was based on this death, typified by the sacrifices slain at its establishment, Ex. 24, 3 ff.

Of a new covenant, νέας, not, as 8, 8. 13; 9, 15, καινῆς. In dis-

tinction from *καύνός*, which refers especially to quality, *νέος* refers to time, the more recent, the later, more recently established covenant, which naturally must be a better one; else why should the first be revoked?

Of a new covenant a Mediator, *μεσίτης*, a go-between, an arbitrator, one who endeavors to effect an agreement between two parties, to make or restore peace and good will between them. The Old Testament also had its mediator, Moses, the man of God, a man unique in the history of Israel, Deut. 34, 10. Cp. his call, Ex. 3; his close communion with God, Ex. 33, 11; Num. 12, 6, 8; his shining face, Ex. 34, 29. He was the greatest of all prophets, Deut. 18, 15 ff.; 34, 10; the deliverer of his people, Ex. 3—15; a man who dearly loved his people, who would rather be stricken out of the Book of Life than be saved without his people, Ex. 32, 32; cp. his fervent pleas throughout, Ex. 32—34. Yet, after all, Moses was a mere man, sinful, who because of his transgression was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. We have in the New Testament a better Mediator, Jesus, whose very name signifies that He is what Moses never could be, a Savior, Matt. 1, 21; Luke 2, 21; whose superiority to Moses and Aaron and even to the angels the author had so clearly and convincingly set forth in the opening chapters; who can save because He is the Son of God. This Mediator does not merely arrange the conditions on the basis of which God and man may come to an agreement; He does not merely by word and example teach man the most efficient manner of reconciling God. He establishes the covenant by *the blood of sprinkling*. Also the Old Covenant was established by blood, Heb. 9, 18; Ex. 24, 4—8; and during the entire period of the Old Covenant much blood was shed. And that was the blood of sprinkling, the blood being sprinkled or poured against the altar or on the Great Day of Atonement against the Ark of the Covenant. In many instances the blood was also sprinkled upon the sacrificing people or individual, Ex. 24. Through such sprinkling of sacrificial blood a union between God and man was effected, a union, however, not spiritual, but altogether external, ceremonial, ritual. The blood cleansed the Israelite from ceremonial defilement, which excluded from outward communion with God and participation in His worship; it pronounced him once more a member in good standing with that civic commonwealth, the people of Israel, to whom God had revealed Himself. Cp. Heb. 9, 13. In itself it could not effect a spiritual cleansing, Heb. 9, 9. That was possible only because this sacrificial blood was also a prefiguration, a type, of the blood to be shed by the Son of God. Hence only to the believing Israelite was the sprinkling of blood of any spiritual value, and since it was only typical, it had to be repeated time and again, Heb. 10, 1—4, 11. Not

to such a blood of sprinkling, ceremonial, ritual, typical, symbolic, have we come. We are come to a blood *that speaketh better things than Abel*. One would naturally expect the writer to continue, of far greater value than that of beasts. But another comparison occurs to the author. He had stated 11, 4 that Abel still spoke. Even after death the blood of Abel cried out to Him in whose sight the blood of His saints is precious, Ps. 72, 14; 116, 15; cf. Rev. 6, 9, 10. That, however, was a cry for vengeance, a cry that God heard, that brought down upon Cain that truly awful curse, Gen. 4, 10-12. Like Abel the Law of Sinai cries to God for vengeance against all who break it; and like Abel's voice the cry of the Law is heard by the Judge of the living and the dead. Yet even as He is getting ready to punish the evil-doer, there is heard the sound of another voice, speaking better things than Abel. Better, *καττόνα*, more serviceable, more useful, more excellent. This blood cries not from the earth; its voice is heard in heaven. It is the blood of *sprinkling*, which our High Priest sprinkles to Godward, having entered into the Holy Place by and with His blood, thus humanly speaking, bringing it into closest proximity to God, holding it up before His very eyes as it cries for mercy, as it pleads for forgiveness for those whose sins it has atoned. On the basis of this crying blood of Jesus, God is reconciled to the world, 2 Cor. 5, 19. Though we daily sin, daily this blood intercedes for us, Heb. 7, 25; 9, 24; 1 John 2, 1 ff. Nor is this the only place where the blood of sprinkling speaks excellent things. The blood of sacrifice was sprinkled also upon the Israelite, attaching itself to his person. Similarly the blood of Abel attached itself to Cain, dogging his footsteps, accusing, threatening, tormenting his conscience, giving him no rest, no peace of conscience. The blood of sprinkling, Jesus' blood, attaches itself to us also, yet for a better purpose, to speak peace to our wounded conscience, to purge it from evil works, Heb. 9, 14. No matter how loudly the conscience cries out against us, this blood silences it because it speaks of, and applies to the wounded, outraged conscience, that righteousness which this blood has procured for all mankind, that perfection which satisfies all demands of conscience and sets it completely at rest and peace. This blood also speaks of that strength which Jesus supplies to all that are His, enabling the conscience to serve God in good works, Heb. 9, 14; this blood accompanies the Christian on his way through life, supplying all His spiritual needs; this blood is the garment in which he stands before the throne of Judgment, which opens to him the portals of heaven. One need but look up the references to the blood of Jesus in any concordance, and one will be convinced that indeed a union, spiritual, close, intimate, eternal, between God and the sinner is effected by

this blood of sprinkling to which we are come. Naturally the sprinkling of this blood, its appropriation to the individual, is effected by means of the Gospel, the audible and visible Word. The author himself refers to Baptism as a means of grace, a means whereby the blood is sprinkled upon our hearts, Heb. 10, 22. He speaks repeatedly of the Word of God as the means of attaining salvation, chap. 2, 1-4; 3, 7, 8; 4, 2, 12. In fact, the enumeration of the many prerogatives granted by the New Covenant serves merely to motivate effectively and efficaciously his admonition to "refuse not Him that speaketh," v. 25, implying very clearly the power of this Word to grant to all who believe all the rights and privileges enumerated. That the Lord's Supper appropriates to us this precious blood is self-evident, Matt. 26, 27, 28. Diligent use of the means of grace is the only and the efficacious means of becoming and remaining partakers of the manifold grace of God displayed in His kingdom on earth and in heaven.

Homiletical Hints. This passage contrasts the two covenants of God, the latter surpassing in glory the former. *God's Glory as Revealed in His Two Covenants.* 1. The great glory of the first; 2. the greater glory of the second.—Or one may speak on *The Greater Glory of the New Testament.* 1. It is not the fleeting shadow but the abiding reality. 2. It is not the terrifying revelation of God's justice, but a saving and perfecting manifestation of God's grace.—Millennialists speak of a visible coming to Jerusalem, etc. The author of Hebrews speaks of a present enjoyment of this privilege. *The Blessed Lot of Every Believer.* 1. He is come to God's city, vv. 22 a, 23 b. 2. He has round about him exalted companions (angels, first-born, perfected spirits). 3. He has Jesus and His blood.—*The Prerogative of Every Believer.* He is come unto Mount Zion, to an innumerable host of angels, to the Church of the first-born, the spirits perfected, to God the Judge, to Jesus and His blood. Each one of these parts could well be expanded into a sermon and the theme made the subject of the series.—Since the purpose of this description is hortatory, one may make v. 25 a one's theme: *See that Ye Refuse Not Him that Speaketh.* 1. For ye are not come to Mount Sinai. 2. Ye are come to Mount Zion.—Or one may on the basis of vv. 22-24 exhort: *Look Diligently lest You Fail of the Grace of God.* (V. 15.) 1. Would you cast away your exalted citizenship (Zion, city of the living God, v. 22, who is Judge, v. 23)? 2. Would you forsake your noble companions (angels, Church of the first-born, spirits made perfect)? 3. Would you spurn Jesus and His blood?

TH. LAETSCH

Outline for Sermon on Christian Education ***JUDG. 13, 8**

"Is the young man safe?" That was the anxious inquiry of a worried father. Is the young man or woman safe? Are the children safe? This should be the anxious question of the Church. "Whether or not they are safe, what will become of them later in life, depends to a very great extent on what we do for them during their childhood days, upon the training we give them." Much emphasis is laid in our country on education. One out of every four persons is said to be enrolled in quest of some form of education. Our congregations go to great expense to maintain parish-schools. What can we do to make this and other efforts put forth by our Church in behalf of our children more successful? We can pray God for wisdom and direction in the Christian training of our children, and we can act upon the advice He gives us in His infallible Word, as we learn from Manoah and his wife, the parents of the mighty Samson.

Our Prayer for Wisdom in Educating Our Children**1. The need of it****2. The result of it****1**

Israel had again done evil in the sight of God, and the Lord had delivered the people into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. When they showed signs of repentance, God sent them a deliverer in the person of Samson. His parents, Manoah and his wife, were of the tribe of Dan. They had no children, but the Angel of the Lord, the second person of the Holy Trinity, appeared to the woman and promised her a son, who should be a Nazarite, dedicated unto the service of the Lord, consecrated unto Him from youth. Reflecting upon the responsibility of parents of such a child, Manoah asks: v. 8.

This must be the prayer of every parent; for the children belong not to the state, but to their parents. It must be the prayer of the Church and the members of the Church; for the Church must take a hand in the Christian education of the children. It must be the prayer of all those who have to do with the training, especially the Christian training in the parish-school, the Sunday-school, etc.

There is need for praying for wisdom in educating our children. For these children are sinful by birth, children of wrath, who would perish without proper guidance. We know that many

* Compare *The Church and the Christian Education of the Children*, by Arthur Brunn.

modern educators differ with us on this point. And yet, Scripture says: "They are all gone aside." Children, too, must be born again by the Spirit of God, must be led to see their sins and their Savior and to walk the ways of God's commandments. All this is very difficult. Hence we pray for wisdom, especially since the parents and the teachers of little ones are also sinful, knowing only in part. Nor is such prayer vain; God answers it by giving us the necessary directions and by blessing our efforts in behalf of our children.

2

It was not a prayer spoken in vain in Manoah's case, v. 9. Of course, it was implied and presupposed that that child was to be properly instructed in the Word and will of God. Even so we receive full information from the Lord with regard to the Christian training of our little ones, Prov. 22, 6. We Christians know that the way he should go is the way that leads to salvation, John 14, 6; cp. Acts 16, 31. Such faith, however, is created and sustained by the means of grace, Matt. 28, 19, 20; 2 Tim. 3, 14—17. Children are to be baptized and thoroughly to be taught and educated in the Word of Life. Only in this way can they become and remain children of God.

The Bible does not leave us in ignorance with regard to the best way of accomplishing the aims of Christian education. It insists on the Christian *home*, where Jesus dwells, where father and mother fear the Lord, where the children are early brought to their Savior, taught to pray, honor the Word, respect parents, and are admonished on the basis of the Word. Given such a home, the problem of Christian education is more than half solved. But how often are homes far from ideal! All the greater is the responsibility of the Church. She meets that responsibility in the *church services*. Yes, church services are also for children. But the Church cannot meet her responsibility in a better way than by means of the Christian school. In our Sunday-schools good work is done; but the Sunday-school alone does not suffice. And so we have our own parochial schools. That does not prevent us from conducting Sunday-schools for such as cannot come to the day-school and to supplement some of the parochial school's work. Nor does it prevent us from conducting catechumen classes, Saturday-schools, week-day religious instruction, and summer-schools.

All these efforts in behalf of our children will work out to the temporal and eternal welfare of the little ones and to the best interests of the Church. Of Samson we read: v. 24. The Lord blessed such work of child-training. He answers our prayers also by giving us success in our efforts to train children for a life of

Christian faith and love. Yes, it is a fearful thing to neglect the Christian training of our children. Unbelieving parents are guilty of it; also members of the Church are frequently indifferent. Some even have a school in their congregation, but do not find it worth while to send their children or do not cooperate with the school. What follows? Often these children are but meagerly instructed, fall from grace, are lost. Our prayer is that God may keep us from such folly of neglecting our children's Christian education. But where parents realize their duty, rich blessing rests upon them, their homes, their children, the Church, and even the State. They may fall away for a season; some may even be eternally lost. The rule, however, is: "When he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. 22, 6. Give examples of such as persevered in faith thanks to their early training.

Our Synod has grown to be a large body, due, under God, to its system of Christian training, especially to its schools. They call for large expenditures, great sacrifices. Does all this pay? Ask men and women grown old in our midst; also the young people who remained faithful; and the saints already made perfect are praising God for the blessings of a Christian school. And so today we join in the prayer of Manoah, v. 8, for wisdom in educating our children. Pray for all whose task is to train children. God bless our system of education!

PAUL KOENIG

Outlines on the Eisenach Epistle Selections

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

2 THESS. 3, 6—14

The Gospel of Christ, if personally applied for justification and sanctification, adjusts all difficulties of life. It changes us to adapt ourselves to circumstances wrought by God, or it alters a situation in our favor. The Gospel of Christ can restore economic and industrial peace where tyranny and suppression on the part of either employer or employee rage and where political and economic science fails.

Paul's Treatment of the Labor Problem

1. *The Occasion.*

A) Yielding to the natural disposition of the flesh and perhaps also to religious fanaticism, some in Thessalonica, called brethren, shirked work, v. 11, preferring idleness, v. 11, and its resultant gossip and gadding about, v. 11, depending on public or private support, v. 8, all of which is termed disorderly conduct, vv. 6. 11. This self-chosen idleness constituted a moral, economic, and spir-

itual problem.—The report of the conduct of these weak Christians had come to Paul, v. 11. It was a public offense, inexcusable also because it was in disregard of previous instruction and admonition, vv. 6. 10, committed by Christians who exposed a) the Christian religion and congregation to ridicule and contempt and b) themselves to church discipline, vv. 6. 14.

B) The very same temptation faces us today; for the economic and industrial stage is still set for wide-spread idleness. Economists wonder what new problems will arise by reason of the sluggishness threatening the nation anew, and laborers speculate on the coming opportunities of leisure and idleness. We Christians wonder to what degree the temptations will affect our congregations and members.—Are you demanding your rights as a Christian laborer or like the unbeliever? Do you take part in riots and disturbances, instigated not for labor but merely about labor, not for bread but for leisure? Do you take only what you earn, or do you demand as much as you can get by stream-lined idleness, either as employer or laborer, stealing time? And can you run the risk of losing your soul's salvation for the sake of temporal considerations?

2. *The Precept.*

It is the same, cast v. 10 in negative, and v. 12 in positive form. V. 10 refers to the idler. Neither sympathy nor support should be extended him, but if he remains impenitent, he should be excommunicated. V. 12 refers to the worker. He is entitled to just compensation for all work in which he is legitimately occupied either as employer or employee. Avoiding tyranny or rioting, he should live according to v. 12. He has no claim on another's bread.—The precept pertains to all able-bodied, not the sick or the innocent jobless. For these God has made other provision.—This is an old precept, Prov. 6, 6—11; 13, 4; 15, 19; 19, 24; 20, 4; 21, 25; Gen. 2, 19. 20 a; 3, 19; Ps. 128, 2; not subject to revision according to the American or any other standards.—It does not promise riches to the worker, not even modern standards of living, working, eating, leisure, but contentment, v. 12, and serves as a preventive to disorderly conduct.—Fully observed, it proves to be workable, practicable, a blessing; for it is the divine precept, vv. 6. 12. Cp. Eph. 6, 5—9.—These are evangelical admonitions. Relation of Gospel to our daily tasks. "At Thy word," Luke 5, 5. Christians dedicate their daily work to Jesus and keep it undefiled.

3. *The Example of the Practicability of the Precept.*

Vv. 7—9. Paul's example helps to clinch the point. He is not railing and haggling. He lived consistently with the precept he gave others. What gross inconsistency on the part of many brethren who grumble because they cannot obtain shorter hours,

more leisure, and larger salaries, but employ pastors at a low salary and yet expect them to work far into the night. "God preserve unto us a pious ministry!" (Walther.) And God grant unto us a pious laity! "Ye ought to follow us" (text). If the apostolic precepts were applied to all cases, all labor problems would be solved. See vv. 4. 5.

4. A Comparison.

Paul: Work and eat; no work, no bread. The idle world: Insist on eating though you work not. Paul agitates in the name of our Lord, unto labor, and contentment, against idleness, by the Gospel, to his own financial loss, among Christians, in love. The world agitates in the name of selfishness, unto idleness and discontent, for leisure, by force and science, to its own financial gain. The true Christians agree and succeed with Paul and their pastors. A gulf exists between the old divine, successful precept and the modern worldly philosophy, which cannot be spanned by the Christian, Matt. 6, 24. 33. 34.

G. H. SMUKAL

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

HEB. 12, 18—24

This text was addressed to Christians of Jewish extraction, some of whom, having been converted as adults, were in danger of lapsing again into Judaism. The object of the writer therefore was to show them the superiority of the Christian religion over the Jewish worship and to admonish them to remain true to the covenant made with them. Such admonition is necessary also today. With love for material things increasing, love for things spiritual will decrease correspondingly. Let us consider

The Blessed Estate of the New Testament Christian

1. *He shows how much the Gospel Church differs from the Jewish Church*
2. *He shows how much the Gospel Church excels*

1

Vv. 18—21. Read Ex. 19 and Deut. 4. That was a solemn and fearful occasion. The mount itself burning, the country shrouded in darkness, a storm-wind of hurricane proportion, "voice of words" heard, Deut. 5, 4—22. Filled with terror, the people begged Moses to arrange that this fearful scene might end. By using incidents from this scene the apostle shows the difference between the two covenants.

a) Mount Sinai, on which the Old Testament covenant was founded, was a "mount that might be touched." It was very much

external and earthly. The Church on Mount Zion is invisible, spiritual. John 4, 23, 24.

b) Upon that mount there was "blackness and darkness," and the Old Testament dispensation was shrouded in dark shadows and types. In the New Testament the Gospel, the light brought down from heaven, cheering the home and dispelling the darkness of the tomb (Ps. 119, 105; 2 Pet. 1, 19), shines much clearer and brighter.

c) It was a terrifying dispensation, striking them with such dread that they entreated that the word, etc., v. 19. Even Moses, v. 21. The purpose? Gal. 4, 1—7. The Gospel dispensation is mild, kind, condescending, suited to our weak nature. Rom. 1, 16; 1 Tim. 1, 15.

d) It was a limited dispensation. Not all Israel could approach to that holy mount, but only Moses and Aaron. Under the Gospel we all have access with boldness to God, John 6, 37.

2

Vv. 22—24. "Ye *are* come," not "Ye *shall* come." Now already they have entered into the fellowship of eternal realities. The humblest life need not wait for death to draw aside the separating curtain in order to enjoy these privileges. V. 22. The New Testament Church is called Mount Zion, heavenly Jerusalem, city of the living God. Reason: Ps. 9, 11; 76, 2; 110, 2; Is. 2, 2, 3. In the midst of this Church God has His home, collectively and individually. Rev. 14, 1; 21, 2; 1 Cor. 3, 16; 2 Cor. 6, 16. As we toil down here, annoyed by many cares and fighting with many sorrows, let us remember that we have come into heavenly places, v. 22, to dwell in the house of the Lord, "to behold His beauty and to inquire in His temple." Our solemn duty? Phil. 3, 20. Make your investments at home. The Jews invented banking and letters of credit in order that they might the more easily shift their wealth from one land to another. We are strangers here. V. 22. Therefore: Matt. 6, 19, 20.

Heavenly society. V. 22: "to an innumerable company of angels." The myriads of angels which on Mount Sinai made their presence known in thunder and tempest, terrifying the people, now appear rejoicing over additions to their ranks. Luke 15, 10. Those who by faith are joined to the Church are joined to the angels in a fellowship of bliss.

V. 23. "To the general assembly," etc. "General assembly" is a term used in classic Greek for festal meetings of the nation at their great games and always carried in it the idea of joy. We have communion with this great assembly. We belong by faith to the congregation of God's first-born children, those that have

been converted to faith in the first-born Son of God. We are united with them in the same blessed hope, grappling with the same spiritual enemies, and hastening to the same rest and victory. The names of these are inscribed on the register of the great city.

"To God, the Judge of all." More accurately: "to a Judge who is God of all." The office of the early Jewish judges was not only the judicial one, but it also included that of intervening for others and defending their rights. Ps. 40, 17. As members of this select company, we are able to stand before this Judge in trusting confidence by virtue of the justifying faith which has been created in our hearts through the Gospel.

"To the spirits," etc. We are even now one great congregation with the saints that have reached the bliss of heaven. Luke 23, 43; 2 Cor. 5, 8; Phil. 1, 23. Hymn 463, 1. How noble the lowest and humblest human life becomes! Like some rough sea-shell, tossed about in the surge of a stormy sea; but when opened, all iridescent within, bearing a pearl of great price.

V. 24. All this is possible because we have come to the great Mediator of the New Testament. This covenant is ratified by the blood of Christ which pacifies God and purifies the consciences of men. This blood speaks to God in behalf of sinners. It pleads not for vengeance but for mercy, with a voice so persistent and persuasive that it secures a perfect acquittal for us. Heb. 11, 4.

Conclusion.—We have come into possession of a glorious heritage. We live in the presence of a reconciled God, in the company of angels, perfected saints, and all that are knit to the same Lord. Have we at all times realized and appreciated this? Just what place in our lives does this honorable position occupy? What does this privilege mean to us when we compare it with home, friends, business, ambition, or pleasure? May we always, because of the greater blessedness of the New Testament Church in comparison with the Jewish worship prove ourselves to be the true people of the covenant of God. Rev. 3, 11. Hymn 468, 1. 7.

F. WORTHMANN

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

HEB. 4, 9—13

One of the most comforting doctrines of Holy Scripture is that of the resurrection of the dead. Clearly taught in the Bible, Job 19, 25—27; 1 Cor. 15, 20; 1 Thess. 4, 14; John 14, 19.—But is this doctrine that we shall leave the prison-house of the grave really so very comforting? Suppose a man were in prison and his term were ended, but another crime were hanging over his head and an officer of the law were waiting at the prison gate to arrest him

as he stepped forth into freedom, do you think the prisoner would be comforted by the thought of his release? The doctrine of the resurrection can be comforting only if we know that a happy future awaits us when we shall be released from the grave. A study of our text will show us

The Christian's Assurance of Heaven

1. *There is a heaven.*

There are people who deny the existence of a happy hereafter; they prefer to believe that death ends all, that we die like the animals. And sometimes the Christian is harassed by doubts and wonders whether it is really true that there is a heaven. But all denials and doubts are silenced: v. 9. The Bible is filled with passages that speak of heaven, Heb. 12, 22; Ps. 16, 11; 1 Pet. 1, 4; 2 Cor. 12, 2, 4; and many others. We are certain that heaven exists, and we are comforted by this certainty. We are beset by sorrow and trial and sin in this life; sometimes our burdened heart asks whether the troubles will never end. Troubles may continue; but they will have an end. The men who voyaged with Columbus were frantic with terror because they thought there might be an endless ocean; their hearts took courage when they saw the land of the New World. We need not fear; all trouble will end; there is a heaven. Hymn 566, 1.

2. *Heaven is a rest.*

The word used in v. 9 for *rest* is peculiar; it means "Sabbath-festal celebration." When God had finished all the work of creation, He rested; and He commanded that His people in the Old Covenant should observe that day as a day of rest. So we are to think of heaven as a rest, with God, from all earthly toil and woe. Some people paint their pictures of heaven with earthly colors; the Indians expected a happy hunting-ground; the Mohammedans expect sensuous delights (*Popular Symbolics*; see Index sub "Heaven"). We must draw our pictures of heaven with Bible colors. Heaven is rest.

Does this description of heaven satisfy? That depends. If a person delights in sin, then the prospect of rest from all sin is not so alluring; if a person is unwilling to bear a cross for Jesus' sake, then the promise of rest from all trials does not interest him; if a person is quite satisfied with his meager efforts to please God, then the expectation of rest from these puny efforts will not seem desirable. But if we battle valiantly against sin; if we are burdened with a cross for Christ's sake; if we are chagrined at our futile efforts to please God, then the thought of *rest* from it all is glorious, v. 10. Hymn 566, 4.

3. Heaven is for the people of God.

Not for every one? Some say that all will go to heaven (Universalists, *Popular Symbolics*, 436). But the Bible says that heaven is for the people of God. And who are they? In the Old Testament the Jews are many times called the people of God. Does that mean that we who are not Jews cannot get to heaven? No; the people of God have ever been those who believe in Jesus, the Messiah, the Redeemer. The Jews who believed that Christ would come to save them were God's people; the Christians who believe that Christ has saved them are God's people, Titus 2, 14; 1 Pet. 2, 9. By faith in Christ we have become people of God. Heaven is for God's people; heaven is for us.

Should we not therefore strive to remain people of God? There is great danger of losing this privilege. The Jews lost it through unbelief, vv. 11. 2. We are in danger of losing the privilege in the same way, through unbelief and sin. We sin daily; but God forgives sin to those who repent. If a person remains impenitent, however, or does not believe the teachings of Scripture, he is not of God's people. The Bible-stories of the sins of the Jews in the desert and their disregard of God's promises must be a constant warning to us, lest we also lose the high privilege of being people of God.

How can we remain God's people and thus have assurance of heaven? Our own efforts will fail. Temptation is too strong; our heart, self-righteous by nature, rebels against repentance; our faith often wavers in the hour of trial and before the assaults of unbelief. But the Word of God will uphold us. It will show us our sins, convince us of the need of repentance, lead us to faith in Christ, and teach us true righteousness, vv. 12. 13. If we heed God's Word, we shall be God's people, John 8, 47. Then we shall have the assurance of heaven. Our one endeavor in life should therefore be: v. 11.

FREDERIC NIEDNER

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

JAS. 2, 10—17

The doctrine of perfectionism as held by Rome, Methodism, the Holiness Churches, the advocates of the "victorious life," is anti-Scriptural and dangerous. See Conc. Theol. Mthly., III, pp. 417. 881. As long as Christians live in the world, Rom. 7, 14 ff.; Phil. 3, 11 ff.; 1 John 1, 8, etc., apply. This does not mean that Christians need not strive for perfection.

Christians Must Strive for Perfection

1. *God's Law is satisfied with nothing less*
2. *God's Gospel obligates and enables us to strive for it*

1

V. 10. Modernism reverses this statement of the apostle. Man may transgress as many commandments as he pleases; as long as he shows some good traits, be it a certain chivalry, an inclination to certain forms of charity, loyalty to some principle or code, irrespective of its nature, etc., this good quality, this trait will cover the multitude of his sins, will atone for his errors, will prove that, after all, there is a spark of the divine in him, that he is not utterly bad, not hopelessly lost. Over against this widespread indifference to the wickedness and disastrous consequences of sin the pastor must show its true nature, lawlessness, rebellion, and its just penalty, eternal damnation. Transgress one commandment, purposely or accidentally, unknowingly ("offend"—stumble), and you have transgressed, overstepped, violated, the whole Law and become guilty of all the Law; you are held in its inexorable clutches, for you have sinned against the supreme law, the summary of God's Law, love, Deut. 6, 5, of which the individual commandments are only examples. One broken link breaks the entire chain. In this series of examples one commandment is as important as any other, for all are given by the same Lawgiver, God, who holds every offender, be it in many, be it in one point, guilty of all. Cp. Jas. 4, 17; 1 John 3, 4. 8. 10; Deut. 27, 26; Rom. 6, 23.

2

Here we often hear an objection. Why be so scrupulous? We are no longer under the Law, but under the Gospel, the Law of liberty, which has freed us from sin and its consequences, also from the Law of Moses, its demands and threats. Not works but faith justifies. Works are unnecessary; constant insistence on their necessity may be harmful, engendering a spirit of legalism and self-righteousness, utterly at variance with the Gospel.

The apostle nips this argument in the bud, v. 12. The law of liberty is not a law of license, nor of lassitude in doing good works; it is the Gospel of righteousness and holiness. While the Law of Moses obligates to righteousness, but does not and cannot engender the perfection it demands, the law of liberty, the glorious Gospel of Christ, not only obligates us to righteousness but enables us to strive for, and constantly grow in, holiness. That message John 3, 16; 2 Cor. 5, 19—21 makes us free, lovers of Him that set us free. This grateful love does not rest content with one or two weak attempts at holiness, but will make us zealous of good works, Titus 2, 14; cp. Rom. 6, 15—23; 8, 2—17; 12, 1 ff. Being under the law of liberty, you expect to be and shall be judged by this law, the Gospel; therefore v. 12. So do, not as galley slaves driven by the taskmaster's lash, not in a spirit of bargaining with God, trying to

get the best of the deal, looking for greatest possible reward for least possible exertion, nor as abusing liberty, Gal. 5, 13; 1 Pet. 2, 18. No; as free children, willingly serving God and the fellow-man in fervent love. Where such merciful love is lacking, you are no longer ruled by, and following, the law of liberty, you are under the law of bondage, v. 13. Only mercy, the sure proof that you are under the Gospel regime, can triumph over judgment. There is no judgment for mercy.

Is then, after all, faith not sufficient? Must works be added before it can justify? No, no, says the apostle. But: vv. 14, 15. As surely as love that is content with mere words and has no deeds to show, is dead, no love, so surely is faith that is no more than a faith of the head and lips and mouth no living faith but a dead thing, which is as powerless to justify as it shows itself to be powerless to sanctify. "Faith is a divine work in us, which transforms us, gives us a new birth out of God, John 1, 13, slays the Old Adam, makes us altogether different men in heart, affection, mind, and all powers and brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, it is a living, energetic, active, mighty thing, this faith! It cannot but do good unceasingly. There is no question asked whether good works are to be done; but before the question is asked, the works have been done, and there is a continuous doing of them. But any person not doing such works is without faith. He is groping in the dark, looking for faith and good works, and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, although he indulges in a lot of twaddle and flummery concerning faith and good works." (Luther, translated by Dau. Read the whole passage, St. L. XIV, 99 f.)

Surely Christians must strive for perfection. Heb. 12, 14; Phil. 3, 13—15.

TH. LAETSCH



Miscellanea

"The HEAVEN and the Earth," Gen. 1, 1

What agreement or disagreement exists between Gen. 1, 1 and the statement in the First Article "Creator of heaven and earth"? Question 111 of our Synodical Catechism asks: "What do we mean by 'heaven and earth'?" And the answer reads: "All creatures, visible and invisible." Is there a contradiction?

Gen. 1, 1 clearly speaks of the *materia* of which God made the heavens, including the firmament of the heavens. There is great unanimity among the commentators with regard to this passage, only that some take the expression in a somewhat wider sense than others. Daechsel, for example, states: "Den Himmel oder die unsichtbare Welt gleich auf einmal, in fertiger Gestalt und vollendeter Schonheit." Luther explains his idea of "diese erste Materie" at some length. Tuch writes: "Himmel und Erde Ausdruck fuer Weltall."

The First Article, on the other hand, speaks of the creation in general, as the reference to Col. 1, 16 indicates, and does not quote Gen. 1, 1. The expression here clearly includes all the creatures which came forth by the command of God during the six days of the creation. P. E. K.

The "Hymnus Scoticus" of Patrick

This famous hymn, sung by the peasants of Ireland at bedtime as a breastplate against evil, is ascribed to Patrick, who is said to have composed it when he was haled before the heathen priests for lighting a fire on Easter Eve contrary to the laws of the land. A shorter version of this hymn, in rimed form, is given in *Missionary Stories for Young People*, p. 30. The longer version is found in the book *Early Christian Missions*, by Mrs. Rundle Charles. It is printed by request:

1. I bind to myself today
The strong power of the invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
The Creator of the elements.
2. I bind to myself today
The power of the Incarnation of Christ with that of His
Baptism,
The power of the Crucifixion with that of His Burial,
The power of the Resurrection with the Ascension,
The power of the coming to the Sentence of Judgment.
3. I bind to myself today
The power of the love of Seraphim,
In the obedience of Angels,
In hope of Resurrection unto reward,
In the prayers of the noble Fathers,
In the predictions of the Prophets,
In the preaching of Apostles,
In the faith of Confessors,
In the purity of holy Virgins,
In the acts of Righteous Men.

4. I bind to myself today
 The power of Heaven,
 The light of the Sun,
 The whiteness of Snow,
 The force of Fire,
 The flashing of Lightning,
 The velocity of Wind,
 The depth of the Sea,
 The stability of the Earth,
 The hardness of Rocks.
5. I bind to myself today
 The Power of God to guide me,
 The Might of God to uphold me,
 The Wisdom of God to teach me,
 The Eye of God to watch over me,
 The Ear of God to hear me,
 The Word of God to give me speech,
 The Hand of God to protect me,
 The Way of God to prevent me,
 The Shield of God to shelter me,
 The Host of God to defend me
 Against the snare of demons,
 Against the temptations of vices,
 Against the lusts of nature,
 Against every man who meditates injury to me,
 Whether far or near,
 With few or with many.
6. I have set around me all these powers
 Against every hostile savage power
 Directed against my body and my soul,
 Against the incarnations of false prophets,
 Against the black laws of heathenism,
 Against the false laws of heresy,
 Against the deceits of idolatry,
 Against the spells of women and smiths and druids,
 Against all knowledge which binds the soul of man.
7. Christ protect me today
 Against poison, against burning,
 Against drowning, against wound,
 That I may receive abundant reward.
8. Christ with me, Christ before me,
 Christ behind me, Christ within me,
 Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
 Christ at my right, Christ at my left.
 Christ in the fort,
 Christ in the chariot-seat,
 Christ in the poop.
9. Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
 Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me,
 Christ in every eye that sees me,
 Christ in every ear that hears me.
10. I bind to myself today
 The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,
 The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
 The Creator of the elements.
11. Domini est salus,
 Domini est salus,
 Christi est salus,
 Salus tua, Domine, sit semper nobiscum.

P. E. K.

Pedagogical Hints from Prov. 1, 1—8

That the Book of Proverbs is a great educational treatise is fairly well known to all careful Bible-readers. It does not seem to be so generally known that the first verses of this remarkable book contain more than a dozen words which reveal a pedagogical wisdom such as one would rightly associate with an inspired account of this kind.

Solomon calls his collection *proverbs, paromiai, parabolae*, the Hebrew noun being derived from the verb לֹטֶל, "to quote a saying with a deep meaning, to act as a reciter of such sayings." Hence the noun signifies "Spruch, Denkspruch, einen kurzen, sich leicht einpraegenden Satz, der auf viele Faelle anwendbar ist, einen Spruch tieferen Inhalts."

In v. 2 the object of the teaching of parables, or proverbs, is stated: "to know wisdom and instruction, to penetrate into the meaning of words of understanding." The first word is *wisdom*, חכמָה, from a verb which signifies "to become or to be wise, to have a thorough knowledge of." Hence the meaning of the noun is "Geschicklichkeit, Kunde, Faeigkeit, Dinge richtig zu beurteilen und Schwierigkeiten zu loesen." The noun implies the possession of a functioning body of information. The second noun of the verse is יְמִינָה, from the verb *jasar*, which contains much of the meaning included in the Greek παιδεία, "Unterweisung," with the additional thought of "Zurechtweisung, Warnung, Zucht zur Weisheit." Cp. Prov. 15, 33. The verb in the second part of the verse is likewise significant, for the Hifil of יְמִין means "to impart understanding, to give adequate knowledge." This is also included in the final noun of the verse, for בְּנֵי יְמִינָה signifies "understanding, penetration."

In v. 3 *musar* is again used, but it is connected with the noun שְׁבָל related to the verb *sakal*, which means "to pay careful attention to, to observe with understanding, to apply prudence, — einsichtsvoll betrachten, Einsicht haben," the noun thus signifying a knowledge based upon careful observation. The first expression of the verse therefore has reference to an earnest instruction which leads to proper observation and understanding. The remaining nouns of the verse clearly have in mind the application of proper instruction in the matter of justice, uprightness, and integrity, "Gerechtigkeit, Gerdheit und Aufrichtigkeit," so that a person possessing these attributes will apply them with the proper σωφροσύνη, or consecrated common sense.

V. 4 speaks of giving to the simple subtlety, עַרְמָה, from the verb *aram*, to be cunning, crafty, artful in the good sense, "listig, schlau, klug, gescheit sein." It is a prudence based upon shrewdness and sharp analysis. With this is connected, according to the second part of the verse: "to give to the lad knowledge and discretion." The first of these nouns, רַעַם, connected with the verb *jadah*, signifies any kind of knowledge, specifically that based upon adequate insight, "Wissen, Erkenntnis, Einsicht," on the basis of proper teaching. The last noun of the verse is מִזְפָּה, connected with *dsamam*, "to plan, to consider carefully," hence "a plan, an attitude of deliberation, — Gewandtheit, Klugheit."

In v. 5 the writer continues in his enumeration of the attributes making for true wisdom by showing the effects of proper instruction,

by stating that "a wise man will hear and will add to learning," the noun here being **לִקְחָה**, which signifies what the hearer receives (*lakach*), the information which he possesses on the basis of transmitted knowledge. The second part of the verse expands the thought: "A sensible person will attain to wise measures." The noun **חָבָלָה**, connected with *chabal*, signifies the arts of *κυβερνητικός*, of directing a ship or the affairs of a body or of the state. Cp. Job 37, 12; Prov. 11, 14. Therefore the noun signifies such measures as will serve for the proper direction of the affairs of life.

V. 6 introduces some further words with pedagogical implications. The statement reads: "To understand a proverb and the interpretation, the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." The first noun in this instance is **מִשְׁׁלָה**, from the verb with the same consonants, "to represent by means of pictures and parables." Hence the meaning is "Rede mit mehr als buchstäblicher Bedeutung, mit tieferem Sinne oder versteckten Anspielungen, welche das Nachdenken in Anspruch nehmen, Spruch tieferen Inhalts," that is, "saying with a deeper or hidden meaning, a proverb whose understanding is not immediately patent or obvious, but requires study." The second noun is **מִלְּזָה**, connected with the verb *litz*, "to speak in a hidden or mocking manner." One might therefore translate the noun with "Raetsel, raetselhafter Lehrspruch,—riddle, enigmatic saying, statement with hidden implications." The final noun of the verse is **מִרְאָה**, which carries the implication of "something that is locked from view," hence "a riddle, a dark saying, a mysterious statement." All these are to be understood by him who is properly trained in the ways of wisdom.

In v. 7 we have no new words, the text merely adding the declaration: "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (*chokmah — musar*). V. 8 addresses itself directly to the pupil: "Hear, my son, the instruction (*musar*) of thy father and do not leave the law of thy mother." The last noun in the verse is **מִשְׁׁרָתָה**, the well-known word for "law, rule, ordinance, prescription." This verse is also included in the fundamental rules of a pedagogy according to the will of the Lord. The entire eight verses are worthy of the most careful study; for it is apparent that a greater knowledge and a better application of the pedagogy of the Bible will prevent or remedy much of the mechanical, superficial teaching about which so many complaints are heard in our days. Although the Bible is not a text-book on pedagogy, its pedagogical maxims are the wisdom of the all-wise God and were written for our learning.

P. E. K.



Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

I. Amerika

The Denial of the Inspiration of Holy Scripture a Fundamental Error. The *Presbyterian* of June 10 writes: "Christianity is founded upon a divine revelation, a revelation that is therefore authoritative in all matters pertaining to faith and practise. Apart from this foundation upon a God-given Book there would be no certainty of salvation, no true hope of eternal life and no clear authority as to the moral requirements of God. But since Christianity claims to be the one true religion, she has always established herself upon an infallible, inerrant revelation that God has given to men under the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit. In view of this fundamental doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures a serious problem is confronting the Presbyterian denomination. A large number of the recent graduates of our seminaries who are coming into the active ministry and becoming the pastors of many of our churches do not accept the doctrine of the verbal, or plenary, inspiration of the Scriptures. The 'higher criticism' of modern scholarship, which is so wide-spread today, has succeeded in permeating their minds with doubt and skepticism and is destroying their faith in the Word of God. It is a serious question that we must face. The Confession of Faith does not distinguish between the great spiritual truths of the Bible and the historical facts and details that are recorded; it does not grant more authority to the ethical teachings of Jesus than it does to the writings of St. Paul; nor does it separate the passages that speak of God's love from those that record His wrath and justice and say that the former are divinely inspired and that the others are false ideas of bigoted Jewish writers. But the Confession of Faith of our Church accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a complete whole and says of them, as a whole, that they are the Word of God. . . . If one does not accept the full authority and inspiration of the Scriptures, but sets himself up as the standard by which he selects those portions of the Bible to which he ascribes divine inspiration, then the Supreme Judge is no longer the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures, but the individual man himself. Recently a candidate for the ministry who does not accept the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures admitted to the writer that the standard which he used in finding those portions of the Bible that, he felt, were divinely inspired was his own conception or idea of God. When one comes to such a view of the Scriptures as this young man has, he ceases to believe that the Bible is the infallible rule of faith and practise. . . . If we lose this trust in the full and complete authority of the Holy Scriptures, there will be little left to our religion. The infallibility of Christ stands or falls with the infallibility of the written Word, and if we lose one, we must give up the other. Let those who love the Christ of a complete God-inspired revelation affirm and defend their belief in this foundational doctrine. May the ministers of the Gospel, whose duty it is to proclaim the message of Almighty God as it is revealed to

us in the Scriptures as the infallible, inerrant, divinely inspired and God-given Word of Truth."

"A serious problem is confronting the Presbyterian denomination," and the same fundamental error is disturbing the Lutheran Church. There are many Lutheran seminaries in Europe and America whose graduates have been filled with aversion to the Biblical doctrine of the verbal inspiration. Prominent men in the Lutheran Church are spreading the doctrine that only parts of the Bible are inspired, only those passages which deal with Christ directly. They absolutely refuse to subscribe to the teaching that Holy Scripture is in every way inerrant. And that is a fundamental error, an error which cannot be tolerated in the Church one moment. For "if it cannot be said that the Bible is the Word of God, but only that it contains it, the authority of the Scriptures is set aside, and the consequence is that, faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures being lost, faith in Christ, of whom the Scriptures testify, will also be lost." (C. H. Little, *Disputed Doctrines*, p. 19.) "The denial of the doctrine of inspiration is the subversion of Christian theology. Yielding the doctrine of inspiration, Christian theology would lose its only source, the word of Scripture. If the Bible is no longer the infallible Word of God, but only a fallible record of the things which it relates, the *loci classici* and the *dicta probantia* have lost their force." (F. Bente, *Lehre und Wehre*, 1902, p. 130.) There are those among American Lutheran theologians "who do not yet dare to regard the Bible as the Word of God and to treat the objective Word of God as the only principle of theological knowledge. By their denial of verbal inspiration—and there is no other kind of Scripture inspiration—the whole order of things in theology still remains turned topsy-turvy in principle. When determining what is Christian doctrine, these theologians do not take their stand on Scripture as the deciding factor, but on their 'experience' or on their human ego. This should not be overlooked by the American Lutheran Church." (F. Pieper, *Conversion and Election*, p. 89.) "With the Biblical doctrine of the inspiration of Holy Scripture stands and falls the certainty, truth, and divine character of Scripture itself and of the entire Christian religion." (C. F. W. Walther. See *CONC. THEOL. MTHLY.*, 1936, p. 732.) "Darum heisst's rund und rein, ganz und alles geglaubt oder nichts geglaubt. Der Heilige Geist laesst sich nicht trennen noch teilen, dass er ein Stueck solle wahrhaftig und das andere falsch lehren oder glauben lassen. . . . Des wird mich (achte auch wohl, auch keinen vernueftigen Menschen) niemand bereden ewiglich, dass ein Mensch (so er anders ein Mensch ist, der bei Vernunft ist) sollt' mit Ernst glauben koennen einem Buch oder Schrift, davon er gewiss waere, dass ein Teil (schweige denn drei Teile) erlogen waere, dazu nicht wissen muesste, welches unterschiedlich wahr oder nicht wahr waere, und also im Sack kaufen muesste." (M. Luther, XX, 1781. 2275.) "Wo das Buch endet, da endet die Kirche." (M. Luther, Erl. Ed., 26, p. 100.) Let those who love the Christian Church, let those who love Christ and the Gospel, affirm and defend their belief in the fundamental doctrine of verbal inspiration!

E.

Freedom of Choice.—In the Question Box of the *Lutheran Companion* this question and answer appeared:

“**Question:** ‘There has always been a question in my mind about the meaning of Acts 13, 48. Can it be that we cannot change from sinners to God’s elect?’—*M. L.*

“**Answer:** The verse in question reads thus: ‘And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the Word of God; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.’

“This sentence from the *Expositor’s Greek Testament* states my own opinion about this verse: ‘There is no countenance here for the *absolutum decretum* of the Calvinists, since v. 46 had already shown that the Jews had acted through their own choice.’ In v. 46 Paul says to the Jews: ‘Seeing ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.’ Kretzmann, in his *Popular Commentary on the New Testament*, has a similar statement: ‘They believed, not all, but as many as were ordained, or appointed, unto eternal life by God, not in consequence of an absolute decree, but in Christ Jesus, through the redemption in His blood. Their belief was the result of this gracious determination and foreknowledge, predestination, of God, which is spoken of at length in other passages of Scripture, Eph. 1, 3–6; Rom. 8, 28–30.’

“God does not compel any one to believe (an absolute decree), nor does He prevent any one from believing; but no one can believe except by the power of the Holy Spirit, on the basis of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The ‘ordained to eternal life’ were those who did not resist the Holy Spirit, but yielded and believed when He gave the power to believe. God knew beforehand who they were; but He did not bind the will of any one so that they could not believe. Rather, sin had bound man’s will as well as blinded man’s eyes, so that true faith was impossible; the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, breaks the chains and pierces the blindness and gives man the power to believe unto salvation. But the Holy Spirit does not compel some to believe and others to disbelieve. The first result of the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to put man in the position of Adam before the Fall. It restores to him a power that was lost, the power of a true freedom of choice. The responsibility for continued unbelief is entirely man’s own; the glory, if he believes in Christ unto salvation, is God’s alone, who through His Word gave man the power to believe. Let each sinner be assured that, when he hears the Word of God, it comes to him in power and that he has a real chance to believe in Christ unto eternal life.”

Thus far the *Lutheran Companion*. While the purpose of the writer is good, endeavoring to show that the view of the Calvinists is wrong, a serious error has crept into his presentation when he says: “The first result of the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to put man in the position of Adam before the Fall.” There is no Scriptural warrant for a view of that kind; on the contrary, when the Word of God describes conversion as the creation of spiritual life in a person (for instance, Eph. 2), it definitely excludes the position in question.

A.

Tributes to Dr. Machen.—The value of an essentially honest position is signally demonstrated by the many tributes which his enemies have paid the late bold foe of Modernism, Dr. J. Gresham Machen, after his death. Ernest Gordon, in his "Survey of Religious Life and Thought" in the *Sunday-school Times* of May 8, 1937, writes on this point: "One could hardly find two men more opposed to what Machen stood for than the Unitarian Dr. Dieffenbach and the one-time editor of the *American Mercury*, H. L. Mencken. The former, in his tribute, spoke of Dr. Machen as 'as learned and valiant a spiritual warrior as the Protestant Church has produced in modern times'; and after describing the caricatures of him which were current, he adds: 'Gresham Machen was a gentleman. That is the word.' Mr. Mencken also pays tribute to 'his great learning and remarkable clarity.' With his traducers he deals in no tender terms: 'These Dr. Machen had by the ear,' he declares. 'They sought to retain membership in the fellowship while presuming to repeal the body of doctrine on which that fellowship rested.' Of the 'disingenuous evasions of Modernism' he writes: 'It is my belief that the body of doctrine known as Modernism is completely incompatible not only with anything rationally describable as Christianity, but also with anything deserving to pass as religion in general. Religion, if it is to retain any genuine significance, can never be reduced to a series of sweet attitudes possible to any one not actually in jail for felony. It is, on the contrary, a corpus of powerful and profound convictions, many of them not open to logical analysis. Its inherent improbabilities are not sources of weakness to it but of strength.'" Certainly fine tributes, these, and all the more valuable since they come from men who were personally in sympathy neither with Machen as a man nor with his doctrinal status. Machen's efforts on behalf of the defense of positive Christianity against unbelief were certainly many-sided. He sponsored to the end also a union known as the League of Evangelical Students, which was organized by certain Princeton Theological Seminary students after a session of the Interseminary Movement, in which the deity of Christ had been openly flouted and in which one student had told those present that "Buddha could save as well as Christ." "Those who ventured this new organization," writes Ernest Gordon, "were bitterly opposed by certain Princeton professors. But though to befriend these loyal students meant enmity in high places, Dr. Machen stood openly with them. Their reproach was his reproach. Not for one moment did he forsake those who were standing for the Lord Jesus Christ. Through twelve years he continued one of the League's most faithful friends. When he was needed as a speaker at the League's conventions, he would give liberally of his time and means. Never was an inquiring student neglected. One of his last acts was a lengthy correspondence with a Christian student attending a pagan university. This culminated in his sending to the student a copy of each of the books he had written. This is but one of a countless number of such incidents." J. T. M.

"Why Bother with Dead Languages?" "Why Study Hebrew?"—The *Lutheran Herald*, organ of the United Norwegian Church (March 9, 1937), contains a timely plea for a more efficient and thorough study of

the so-called dead languages, including Latin, with a number of striking quotations from various writers. It says: "The really valuable preparatory course for one who expects to enter the ministry is that of language studies, which enables him to read the literature of the Church." It then quotes Dr. Henry S. Gehman of Princeton, who in the Introduction to a book on the Old Testament by Rev. Paul I. Morentz avers: "In this age, when many of our college students are reared under a system of education that stresses the 'practical' subjects to the neglect of the humanities, our students of theology find that Hebrew and Old Testament exegesis require serious effort and time; in consequence, this fundamental discipline, too often without justification, has been regarded as dull and uninteresting or made elective in a large number of theological seminaries. To speak of an 'educated ministry' unless our theological students are trained in the exegesis of the Word in the original languages is sheer nonsense." Furthermore it quotes Dr. Rudolf Kittel, who says: "If a minister of the Word really wishes to understand the Word of God and to present to his flock the great and inexhaustible riches of this Word, he will find invaluable aid if he can verify his text and Biblical references in the original. To use a commentary with satisfaction absolutely requires a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek." More striking still is another quotation from Dr. S. P. Tregelles, which also is found in Morentz's *The Old Testament*: "A disbelief of the plenary inspiration of Holy Scripture and a neglect of the study of Hebrew are two evils which very extensively and very naturally prevail together. If, in our view, the Bible was only superintended as to matter and not inspired as to terms; and if, in consequence, we virtually consider the text of Scripture not, as we affect to call it, the Word of God, but the word of man, then we shall naturally regard the acquirement of the sacred tongue as of little importance and as scarcely meriting the labor of study. A fair translation will give the general sense; and the general sense is all that we regard as of divine authority. But if we view the Scriptures as literally the Word of God, if we regard it as a book not merely superintended, but suggested by the Holy Ghost [the context indicates that the writer means the *sug-ges-tio verbalis*], then surely it will be our object to know exactly what it means, and the sacred language will be studied diligently for that purpose." Finally, the *Herald* quotes Dr. Lewis S. Chafer, president of the Dallas Evangelical Seminary, who says: "The minister should be an able exegete of the Scriptures in the original languages. This competency is possible to the student of average mentality and is imperative if he is ever to speak with authority or exercise a true, worthy leadership in the things of God. Valuable helps are available to those who have not mastered the original languages, and these, it is contended by some, are all a minister needs. No doubt, such helps are a bit more than some ministers seem to need, and if the preacher makes no vital use of the Bible in his ministry, why should the original languages be considered at all? *I have yet to find one man who has mastered the original languages, tasting the depth of the riches which this study unfolds, and who pursues a spiritual ministry, who would sanction anything less than a mastery of these subjects as a preparation for the ministry.*" (Italics our own.)

There is no doubt that the emphasis which is here placed on the study of the ancient languages deserves thorough and conscientious consideration by the entire Lutheran Church in the United States. Luther's prediction that together with the knowledge of the languages in which the Bible was written also the knowledge of theology set forth in these languages will be lost has proved itself true in many cases. At any rate, Modernism and neglect of the Biblical languages, on the one hand, and loyal Christian theology and the thorough study of the ancient languages, on the other, have always gone hand in hand. The plea for greater interest in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin does not mean that we despise the faithful work of such ministers as were unable to acquire these languages on account of the peculiar conditions prevailing at the time when they were preparing for the ministry, but it does mean that no one in the ministry has a right to excuse or even justify the neglect of the ancient languages. The Bible in the original is God's gift to us, and that gift we assuredly dare not treat lightly. To us personally it has always seemed as rather peculiar that some of our best scholars of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were graduates of our "practical seminary" who acquired these languages largely by home study after they had entered the ministry. It is indeed a psychological problem that hundreds of pastors should discard the high advantages accruing from a most valuable study upon which at college they spent so many years. J. T. M.

Truth and Error Mixed. — The following item from the *Christian Century*, included in a communication from Boston, dated March 16, is interesting on account of the confession it contains:

"Timely, vigorous, and outspoken was an address by Dr. R. H. Stafford, pastor of Old South Church, before the Twentieth Century Association last Saturday. 'How,' he asked, 'are the churches to meet the tension of the times?' He defined a church as 'any society organized to carry out the teachings of Jesus under ministers as teachers and executives. Its task is to teach faith and morals. Morals include social issues. But the individual must be left free to determine duties. The Church must not command, but teach. On social issues it has kept pace with modern thought, as appears in the "Social Creed" of 1908. But the social gospel must not divert from the real task; and in social matters the minister is a layman. I am thought conservative because I do not agree that Christianity must condemn the profit system. The Church must be outspoken on the moral principles involved. But it has made three mistakes: advocating abolition of slavery, which set back the welfare of the Negro as well as of the South; supporting prohibition, which made drinking fashionable; and favoring the outlawry of war, which is proving futile. Law is not prescription but description of a norm already established. Instincts like sex or the profit motive cannot be suppressed, but may be canalized. How? I favor in the Church freest discussion, the hearing of all sides. One church requires new members to choose some discussion group.' 'What about the Congregational Council for Social Action?' 'It was appointed at the close of a meeting amid confusion. But responsibility has sobered its leaders. It should be "for discussion." How can 1,000,000 Congregationalists assume to act for 120,000,000 Americans?'" A.

The Strong Faith of the Evolutionist. — The *Lutheran* of April 21 carried this item: "The 'missing link' turns out to be a woman. Dr. Robert Broom of the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria, South Africa, found her in a cave at Sterkfontein and named her rather forbiddingly 'Australopithecus Transvaalensis Broom.' 'The teeth of this Sterkfontein girl,' says Dr. Broom, 'are almost entirely human, and in my opinion there can hardly be any doubt that she is closely related to the ancestor of man.' Dr. Broom also reveals other interesting items of the girl's private life — that she was eighteen years old when she was killed by a sabertoothed tiger, whose fangs left their mark on her bones; that she 'fed on baboons, rabbits, moles, crabs, and small antelopes, all of species now extinct'; that she used weapons to kill the larger game and tools to dig out the moles. Dr. Broom rather ungallantly reveals her present age as 250,000 years." Dr. Broom, if he really said and believes all this, is a man of strong faith. He has a sublime faith in his own capabilities if he really believes that his observations enable him to prove that the Sterkfontein girl, who lived and hunted moles 250,000 years ago, died at the age of eighteen years. And his faith reaches still greater heights — he believes that the faith of some of us will be strong enough to believe him.

By the way, it is because of the vociferations of Dr. Broom and the other evolutionists that many theologians, Lutheran theologians, too, begin to doubt the truth of Gen. 1 and read the theory of theistic evolution into it. They would rather believe Dr. Broom than the inspired account of Moses. They tell us that the findings of science have disproved the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Moses cannot be right if Dr. Broom is right.

It seems, too, that the radical evolutionists are beginning to see that the evolution in which they believe needs some sort of divine supporting power. Howard W. Blakeslee, Associated Press Science Editor, on March 20 reported Dr. Robert Bloom (which is the correct spelling of the name?) as saying, after describing his "small ape with near-human teeth": "I believe that all evolution came about under the guidance of non-material forces, so as to result in man, and that man is the end of evolution." Asked by interviewers for a definition of "non-material forces," Prof. Bloom said: "I mean spiritual forces. I mean some intelligence outside. I think there probably were many of these spiritual forces rather than just one. Their combined result was the appearance and development of man." So here we have the theory of polytheistic evolution.

E.

II. Ausland

Welche Partien der Heiligen Schrift sind Gottes Wort? An uns, die wir glauben, daß „alle Schrift von Gott eingegeben“ ist, 2 Tim. 3, 16, tritt diese Frage nicht heran; aber sie konfrontiert diejenigen, die eine stückweise Inspiration der Bibel lehren. Wenn wir folgendem Passus aus dem „Ev.-Luth. Gemeindeblatt“ vom 21. März hier abdrucken, so geschieht das nicht zu dem Zweck, um einen weiteren Beleg für die weite Verbreitung der Lehre von einer bruchstückartigen, sprunghaften Inspiration zu geben, sondern um zu zeigen, in welcher einer verzweifelten Lage sich die Vertreter der partiellen, sprunghaften, sporadischen Inspiration befinden. — Das „Evangelische Gemeindeblatt für Polen“ spricht sich in einer Rezension also aus: „... Es

steht ja in dem großen Geisteskampf in Deutschland vor allem die Frage im Vordergrund, ob die Bibel noch für das heutige Geschlecht den Wert haben könne wie für die Väter, ob ihre Lehren und Gedanken für uns heute maßgebend sein könnten. Pfarrer Lempp beantwortet diese Frage in den vier von ihm in Stuttgart gehaltenen Vorträgen selbstverständlich bejahend. Er leugnet nicht, daß die Bibel auch ihre menschliche Seite hat und daß sie kein Lehrbuch der Naturwissenschaft oder der Weltgeschichte ist. Es handelt sich in der Bibel ja um ganz etwas anderes: sie ist Offenbarung Gottes. . . . Nicht in dem Sinne, daß Gott die Bibel einfach ihren Verfassern dictiert habe. Das ist gerade das Große, daß Gott seine Herrlichkeit mitten in der menschlichen Schwäche aufblitzen läßt. Bibellesen heißt daher, in all dem Menschlichen, wovon die Bibel redet, das Ewige herauszuhören. Kämpfend, suchend, fragend muß man die Bibel lesen, und man muß die großen Grund- und Hauptgedanken, die sie enthält, verstehen, statt an Einzelheiten hängenzubleiben. Die Bibel bleibt von Anfang bis zum Schluß Christus; das ist die rote Linie, die sich durch alles hindurchzieht. Christus ist der Ausgangspunkt, das Thema, das Ziel und der Mittelpunkt der Weltgeschichte. Das sind die großen Grundgedanken der Bibel, und unter diesen vier Überschriften behandelt der Verfasser sein Thema. Wir hoffen, daß das Büchlein, das eine Lebensfrage unsers Glaubens und unserer Kirche behandelt, auch bei uns viele dankbare Leser finden wird."

Dazu bemerkt das „Ev.-Luth. Gemeindeblatt“: „Diese Rezension zeigt uns, wie man in vielen Kreisen drüber die Bibel beurteilt. Dieser Beurteilung gemäß ist die Bibel nicht Gottes Wort, sondern sie enthält nur Gottes Wort, das hin und her zerstreut sich unter einem großen Haufen menschlicher Irrtümer, unwissenschaftlicher Anschaunungen und kindlicher Ansichten befindet. Wer findet denn Gottes Wort aus diesem Wirrwarr heraus? Der Theolog. Wie weiß er aber, was in der Bibel Gottes Wort ist? Wenn ein Wort auf ihn einen tiefen Eindruck macht, das ist ein Gotteswort. Wie aber, wenn morgen dasselbe Wort auf ihn keinen Eindruck macht? Dann muß er sagen: Es war doch kein Gotteswort. Und kommt ein anderer Theolog. hinzü und sagt: Auf mich macht dieses Wort keinen Eindruck, dann haben wir die verzweifelte Lage, daß, was einer für ein Gotteswort hält, der andere nicht dafür hält. Wehe jeder Kirche, in der solche Theologen regieren!“

In einer fatalen Lage (hier wollen wir den Ausdruck „verzweifelte Lage“ nicht gebrauchen) befinden sich diese Leute auch, wenn sie von den ausgesprochenen Feinden der Kirche gefragt werden, ob sie die Bibel durchaus für Gottes Wort halten. Wie müssen sie sich da winden und drehen! Gottes Wort? Ja — nein. Da stellte jemand zehn Fragen an den Evangelischen Oberkirchenrat in Stuttgart, von denen die siebte also lautete (siehe „Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzg.“, 18. Dez. '36): „Macht der Evangelische Oberkirchenrat wirklich Ernst mit dem Wort. Man muß Gott mehr gehorchen denn den Menschen, wenn er die Offenbarungs- und Gnadenstunde, die uns Deutschen der große Gott durch Adolf Hitler schenkt, nicht würdigt und sich statt auf das Werk des Geistes im wunderbaren Gotterleben der Gegenwart auf den Buchstaben der Bibel beruft, der Bibel, die im Alten Testament ein Jüdengeschichts- und Jüdensonnenbuch ist und im Neuen Testament neben der reinen Lehre Jesu manches störende Beiwerk hat?“ War

der Oberkirchenrat bereit, sich auf den Buchstaben der Heiligen Schrift zu stellen? Das war eine fatale Frage. Die Antwort lautete: „Das hier wiedergegebene Urteil über die Bibel besteht aus Schlagworten, die sich weder auf Luther noch auf die biblische Wirklichkeit noch auf die Ergebnisse der theologischen Wissenschaft berufen können und die auch im Blick auf die religionsgeschichtlichen Tatbestände äußerst fragwürdiger Natur sind. Die evangelische Kirche betrachtet die Bibel als Wort Gottes; nicht im Sinne einer mechanischen Verbalinspiration, sondern als das in Menschenwort gefleidete Zeugnis Gottes von seinem Wesen und Wollen, insbesondere als Zeugnis von seinem eingeborenen Sohne Jesus Christus, in dem das Wort Fleisch geworden ist. Gäbe sie dieses Wort preis, um statt dessen Lehren und Strömungen des politischen Denkens zur Grundlage und zum Inhalt ihrer Glaubensverkündigung zu machen, dann fièle sie ab von der Offenbarung Gottes in Christus, sie verriete ihren Herrn und hätte das Recht verwirkt, sich ‚evangelische Kirche‘ zu nennen.“ E.

Die Heidelberger Landluege. — Our readers are familiar with the story of this hoax. They have read about it in their *Concordia Triglotta* (p. 184, Hist. Introd.). Hardenberg, a Calvinist masquerading as a Lutheran, who was dismissed from his office as dome-preacher in Bremen in 1561, “also published the fable hatched at Heidelberg (*Heidelberger Landluege*, indirectly referred to also in the *Formula of Concord*, 981, 28), but immediately refuted by Joachim Moerlin, according to which Luther is said, toward the end of his life, to have confessed to Melanchthon that he had gone too far and overdone the matter in his controversy against the Sacramentarians; that he, however, did not want to retract his doctrine concerning the Lord’s Supper himself because that would cast suspicion on his whole teaching; that therefore after his death the younger theologians might make amends for it and settle this matter.” (Cf. C. F. W. Walther, *Der Concordienformel Kern und Stern*, p. 47.) Now, believe it or not, there are those who in the year 1937 still accept the ridiculous fable as truth and keep on spreading it. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Jan.—March, 1937) publishes an article entitled “Ulrich Zwingli,” which states: “The great German Reformer [Luther] appears nowhere in a more disadvantageous light than in his treatment of Zwingli [at Marburg]. It is with pain that we revert to these weaknesses in so great a man as Luther. . . . It is gratifying to remember that on his deathbed Luther charged Melanchthon to make further concessions and regretted the obstinacy he had displayed in this matter.” (P. 58 f.) The Reformed — at least some of them — consider this a choice morsel. It is interesting to note how Dr. Christoph von Rommel treats the matter. In his biographical book *Philipp der Grossmuetige*, published at Giessen 1830, he states in Vol. I, p. 252 ff.: “So hemmte er [Luther], und er allein (Melanchthon schwieg), den Lauf der Reformation um drei Jahrhunderte. . . . So endete das Marburger Religionsgespraech, . . . fruchtlos in dem Erfolg (zur grossen Freude der Papisten), weil nach dem grossen Moment das Spiel der personlichen Leidenschaften wieder begann, besonders von Luther, der erst kurz vor seinem Tode bekannt haben soll, dass er dieser Sache zu viel getan.” Notice the “soll.” But in the note to this statement, contained on page 226 of Vol. II, all doubt has vanished and the

full details of the story are spread out. "Ueber Luthers Reue ist folgendes feierliche Zeugnis des Predigers Alb. Hardenberg zu Bremen, eines Vertrauten Melanchthons, nach des letzteren eigener Erzaehlung, vorhanden. Als Luther zum letztemal von Wittenberg nach Eisleben reisen wollte, sprach Melanchthon mit ihm in seinem Hause: er habe die alten christlichen Lehrer vom Abendmahl nummehr fleissig gelesen und der andern Lehre mehr als der ihrigen uebereinstimmend gefunden. Darauf Luther eine Zeitlang geschwiegen und nachher gesagt: 'Lieber Philippe, was wollen wir viel sagen? Ich bekenne es, dass der Sache vom Sakrament zu viel getan ist.' Als Melanchthon den Vorschlag machte, deshalb eine neue Erklaerung an den Tag zu geben, habe er geantwortet, er habe dieser Sache sorgfaeltig nachgedacht, aber dadurch mache man die ganze Lehre verdaechtig. 'So will ich das dem lieben Gott befohlen haben; tut Ihr auch was nach meinem Tode.'" We can understand why the Reformed like to tell and hear this story. If Luther himself was not so sure of his position, perhaps the Reformed are right after all! And so the *Heidelberger Landluege* will not down. (The reader might now turn to page 981 of *Concordia Triglotta*, § 28 ff. Luther foresaw that after his death some such thing as the *Heidelberger Landluege* would be set in motion.)

There are three stories concerning Luther, which men are going to keep on telling. They are too good not to be true. The first is the *Heidelberger Landluege*, current in Reformed circles. The Catholics like to tell the story that Luther turned Reformer because he wanted to marry (or was it because not he, but Tetzel, had received the indulgence concession?). And the liberal theologians take comfort from the story that Luther abhorred verbal inspiration. E.

French Protestantism.—A precise statement of the number of French Protestants it is difficult to give. There are computed to be about 777,000 Protestants, of which number 717,000 are attached to French churches, 2,000 to foreign churches, 30,000 to societies for evangelization, 5,000 to the Salvation Army, and the remainder to various sects. The numerical force of French Protestantism is small in comparison with its moral and spiritual force, which is great. —*The Presbyterian*.

The Roman Church in Europe.—One of our exchanges reports that Romanism is both attacking, and being attacked in Europe, at present. In Yugoslavia, where the government is considering signing a concordat with the Vatican, a bitter conflict is on, and the officials of the Eastern Orthodox Church are threatening with excommunication those members of the government who sanction and support the proposed concordat. A Yugoslav army officer is reported as saying, "Communists are very bad for a country, but priests aren't much better." In Germany, Romanism is fighting for its life, and its position is becoming increasingly difficult. In Austria, however, it is on the offensive and is boldly attempting to suppress other denominations. That Romanism plays an important role in the present civil war in Spain is undeniable. In Hungary Protestants and Catholics are vehemently opposing each other. The next five years may bring important developments. A.

Book Review — Literatur

The Fatherly Rule of God. A Study of Society, State, and Church. By Alfred E. Garvie, D.D., Th.D. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." The Abingdon Press, New York. 256 pages, $7 \times 4\frac{3}{4}$. Price, \$1.25.

Dr. Garvie, a leading theologian of England (Congregationalist) and a leading figure in the Stockholm Conference ("Life and Work") and in the Lausanne Conference ("Faith and Order"), names "as the subject of this volume the relation of the State and Church." "That there may be co-operation and not conflict, it is necessary to define the functions of the State and the mission of the Church." (P. 69.) It is equally clear that a false conception of these respective functions will produce a wrong conception of the relation of Church and State, a harmful cooperation. Now, Dr. Garvie's definition of the functions of the State is not Scriptural. First, he rejects that view as "absolutely false that God has appointed the State as a restraint on sin by the exercise of force" (p. 28; cp. p. 166). And, mainly, he would have "the activities of the State" to be "a *præparatio evangelica*" (p. 169), "a 'tutor unto Christ'" (p. 86). The State must be dominated not merely by "the Natural Law of God as Creator," but also by "the grace of God as Father, redeeming and reconciling in Christ" (p. 177). The State must shape its policy in accordance with Christian ethics and dare not neglect religious education (p. 205. 66). And what is the mission of the Church in this sphere? The Church must "encourage and even summon Christian men and women individually to accept their responsibility as citizens" (p. 169). That is most Scriptural. But Dr. Garvie adds: "Hitherto the Church has recognized" that as her duty; meaning that she must do more, and that is "to bring all the kingdoms of this world into captivity to the kingdom of the Son of God" (p. 165; see page 87: "This view," advocated by Dr. Garvie, "was condemned at the Stockholm Conference by some of the Germans present as Anglo-American activism"). In accordance with this view the Church must "advise the State as to the application of the principles of the divine revelation to the concrete situation of the nation at the time," must "instruct the nations and their rulers in the ways of the Lord," must insist on the "authority of the Church" when thus advising and instructing (p. 173 f.), "must make itself competent by adequate knowledge of all the relevant facts to offer sound judgment," and the "politicians are not justified in resenting the advice of the Church as illegitimate interference" (p. 190 f.), must not heed "the coward cry 'No politics in the pulpit'" (p. 187). Yes, "to urge the full acceptance of the obligations which the Covenant of the League of Nations imposes or any other treaties or pacts which aim at mutual protection against aggression, seem to me aims about which the Christian Church cannot be indifferent or inactive, but must be insistent in pressing as an obligation on the State" (p. 189). If these be the respective functions of the State and the Church, if their work thus overlaps (Dr. Garvie himself states that in this system "the spheres of Church and State are consequently overlapping in greater measure,"

p. 165), the two powers will be in constant conflict, and whatever co-operation they devise will be harmful.—Dr. Garvie enunciates some good principles ("However great a nation may be, it is idolatry to put it in place of God," p. 163. "I believe that the Church can own no authority but Christ's," pp. 103. 173. "Not all citizens are members of the Church, and consequently the principles of Christ cannot be carried out in the State as they ought to be," p. 185), but if he gets the State to engage in religious activities and the Church to act as adviser of the State, chaos will result.

Incidentally we note the following. Luther subscribed to the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*, because he "distrusted the Christian people as the directing and controlling agency in the Church" (pp. 121. 144. Dr. Garvie makes these statements, he says, on the authority of Troeltsch). The Lutheran Church teaches consubstantiation. And Luther "bound up the truth of Christ's presence in the Sacraments with an artificial metaphysics" (p. 126). "In the incarnation we recognize a fresh stage in the process of creation, the suprahuman stage of a divine-human order of the sons of God." (P. 30.) "We may think of evolution as the divine method of creation" and ascribe to man "an animal ancestry" (p. 25 f.). "Such phrases as natural corruption, total depravity, original sin, have for me become anachronisms." (P. 28.) "Nor is the Sermon on the Mount a second Decalog, although the author of the first gospel, a Jew, writing for Jews, represents it as being so. The author of the fourth gospel corrects that error." (P. 183.)

We are in hearty accord with a number of statements in this book and urge their earnest consideration: "The voice of the Church does not impress the world with its authority because it often is little else or more than an echo of its clamors." (P. 115.) "There should not be any sphere of human life and work to which the Christian standards should not be applicable." Even though one "who tries to live and act as the Christian ethics, taken literally, requires, appears to the world a fool . . . ; yet he is 'God's fool'" (p. 205). "Luther's teaching on the corporeal presence of Christ in, with, and under the elements "upholds" the *objectivity* of grace, whether faith responded to it or not; always available, whether accepted or not. To a subjective individualism, which lays such stress on the receptivity and responsiveness of faith as to give the impression that the human condition is creative of the divine reality, instead of recognizing that it is the divine reality of grace which evokes the human faith, this teaching is a salutary correction" (p. 126).

TH. ENGELDER

Das Neue Testament unsers Herrn und Heilandes Jesu Christi nach der deutschen Übersetzung D. Martin Luthers. 606 Seiten. „Die Psalmen.“ 179 Seiten. Anhang: 30 Seiten. 4½×7. In biegsamen Leinwandband, mit Rücken- und Deckeltitel gebunden. Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart. Preis: M. 2.40.

Die obengenannte Bibelanstalt in Stuttgart führt unermüdlich fort, handliche und schöne, große und kleine Ausgaben der Bibel zu besorgen. Hier liegt eine sehr feine Ausgabe des Neuen Testaments vor, mit schönen Typen auf dünnem Papier gedruckt, und zwar fortlaufend, so daß zwar die Verse angegeben, aber nicht in Absätzen gedruckt werden. Der Text ist in Abschnitte eingeteilt, die

durch treffende Überschriften bezeichnet werden, und wichtige Stellen sind in Fettchrift gedruckt. Überall sind auch im Text die Evangelien und Episteln des Kirchenjahrs als solche bezeichnet, und außerdem sind andere Perikopenreihen angegeben. Besonders wertvoll ist jedoch, daß vor jedem biblischen Buche die trefflichen Vorreden Luthers stehen, die nach aller Urteil das Beste sind, was in so knappem Umfang zur Einleitung in ein Buch je geschrieben worden ist. Am Schlus sind dann verschiedene Anhänge, nämlich zuerst einzelne Sach- und Wörterklärungen, dann eine Zeittafel, ferner Schriftabschnitte für besondere Fälle des Lebens, weiter ein Wegweiser in die Heilige Schrift, nämlich ein alphabetischer Nachweis von Schriftstellen für die wichtigsten biblischen Begriffe und Tatsachen und endlich eine Bibellestafel für jeden Tag in zwei Jahren. Den Schlus machen biblische Karten und einige treffliche Abbildungen biblischer Stätten. Die Wörterklärungen sind zum Teil recht gut, manchmal freilich auch, wie zum Beispiel bei dem Wort „Hölle“, nicht durchweg richtig. Und der Text, wie wir schon öfters bemerkt haben, ist leider nicht der unveränderte Luthertext, sondern der sogenannte revidierte. Wir müssen aber doch auch sagen, daß gerade beim Neuen Testament die Veränderungen weniger auffallend sind als beim Alten, wo namentlich die bekannte Hiobstelle Kap. 19, 25—27 falsch wiedergegeben ist. Im Neuen Testament ist besonders zu beanstanden 1 Petr. 2, 24, wo es hier heißt, „welcher unsre Sünden selbst hinaufgetragen hat an seinem Leibe auf das Holz“, während wir in Luthers Überföhlung die für das Verständnis so wichtigen Worte lesen: „welcher unsre Sünden selbst geopfert hat“. — Die vorliegende Ausgabe enthält auch den Psalter und Luthers Vorrede dazu — mit der herrlichen Vorrede zum Römerbrief ist diese Vorrede wohl die schönste von allen Vorreden Luthers —, und hier beim Psalter bemerken wir, daß öfters die Überschriften besser und richtiger sind als in der ursprünglichen revidierten Bibel. In deren erster Ausgabe vom Jahre 1893 lautete z. B. die Überschrift zum 22. Psalm: „Leiden und Herrlichkeit des Gerechten. Christi Leidenspsalm“. Damit war nicht klar gesagt, daß dieser Psalm messianisch ist und von Christi Leiden handelt. Hier in dieser Ausgabe heißt es besser: „Der leidende Messias und sein Reich. (Voktion am Karfreitag“, V. 2—20.)

L. Fürbringer

Our Retreat from Modernism. By Dan Gilbert, LL.D. Fundamental Truth Publishers, Findlay, O. 185 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Price, \$1.00 (cloth); 75 cts. (paper). May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Dr. Dan Gilbert is a prolific author, who writes boldly and convincingly in defense of the Christian faith against modernistic agnosticism. Other books by his facile pen are *Evolution, the Root of All Isms*, *The Biblical Basis of the Constitution*, *Crucifying Christ in Our Colleges*, and *The Vanishing Virgin*. In *Our Retreat from Modernism* he insists that Modernism has now spread its delusions long enough for us to know what a menace it is to both faith and morality, it being the great denial of every religious and moral truth cherished by our believing fathers. For this reason he pictures the "God," the "Jesus," the "social gospel," the "morals," the "life," and the "utter hopelessness" of Modernism and closes his book with a hortatory chapter: "We Return to Our Fathers' Faith." We welcome this interesting and popular critique of Modernism (though we certainly do not endorse every statement) and recommend it for study to all whose duty it is to warn Christian people against its insidious and destructive teachings.

J. T. MUELLER

Palestine Speaks. By Anis Charles Haddad. The Warner Press, Anderson, Ind. 173 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Mr. Anis Charles Haddad, B. A., is a native of the Holy Land and a graduate of the University of Jerusalem. At present he is making his home in the United States, where he is continuing his studies. In his book he speaks entertainingly and instructively of many an old custom in Bible days, which he illustrates by similar customs prevailing today in his former homeland. Since he always speaks as a first-hand observer, the interest that attaches to his explanations is all the greater. A large number of photographs, taken with the author's own camera in Palestine, are reproduced in the book. We recommend this new popular commentary on things Palestinian especially for use in school and Sunday-school libraries. The more we know of the land of the Book, the more valuable will be to us the Book of the Land.

J. T. MUELLER

If the Minister is to Succeed. By U. S. Brown, D. D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 1937. 189 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Price, \$1.50.

This is not a treatise on pastoral theology in the formal sense, but it presents ten chapters of valuable suggestions, many of which may well be heeded also by the Lutheran pastor. The main points offered in the discussion state that, if the minister is to succeed, the following is to be observed: "He Must Make the Right Use of Time; He Should Be a Life-long Student; A Pleasing and Forceful Personality Will Be an Asset; Financial Integrity Is Essential; A Challenging Pulpit Message Is Indispensable; Diplomatic Leadership Will Help; Efficient Pastoral Work Is Important; His Major Emphasis Must Be on Evangelism." One is tempted to quote from the many epigrammatic sayings in the book, as, for example: "Not where a man serves, but how he serves, fixes the bounds of his usefulness. Not what a man has, but how he uses that which he controls, determines his worth. Not what a man knows, but how he applies his knowledge to daily tasks, governs his accomplishments." (P. 18.) "Mental efficiency is increased by study." (P. 38.) "The minister's need for books and magazines does not end with his graduation from college; it has just begun." (P. 39.) "No week-day accomplishment by the pastor can fully compensate for a poor sermon preached on Sunday." (P. 87.) "As most pulpits are occupied, not by sages but by ordinary men, the work of sermon-building means unceasing toil, never-ending study, meditation and prayer, the honest use of every available hour in the preparation of the best message each man is capable of producing. It will mean hard work, but nothing else will lead to success." (P. 97.) On the other hand, certain attitudes and tendencies are apparent throughout the book which cannot be commended, for the author shows decided unionistic tendencies, with a chiliastic flare. (Pp. 41, 147.) The author conceives the threefold mission of the Church as consisting in "personal regeneration, social salvation [?], and world evangelism" (p. 185). The chapter on financial integrity is worth the price of the book, that on preaching is weak in its underemphasis on the Gospel of the atonement.

P. E. KRETMANN

The Minister as Prophet. By Charles Edward Jefferson. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 187 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Price, \$1.50.

The five chapters of this book are five lectures on preaching, delivered by the well-known New York preacher at Bangor Theological Seminary in 1904-5. They discuss: The Dimensions of the Work; The Three Men Involved; The Growing of Sermons; Form and Manner; The Place of Dogma in Preaching. Aside from the fact that the author holds a false position concerning Sunday (p. 49) and has a statement on inspiration which can hardly be called adequate (p. 89), the book possesses such great merit that it repays earnest study. One is tempted to quote at length from the many epigrammatic sayings, in particular from chapter V, in which the author speaks on doctrinal preaching. Sentences like the following abound: "It is Christ, and Him crucified, which forms the preacher's message, and leaving Christ out, he abdicates the high position to which he has been called." (P. 179.) The book ought to find many earnest readers.

P. E. KRETMANN

How to Increase Church Attendance. By Roger W. Babson. Fleming H. Revell, London and New York. 160 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Price, with chart, \$1.50.

This is a subject which ought to interest all preachers, all congregations. In the introduction we are told: "The General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches appointed in 1929 a Commission on Church Attendance," consisting of twelve men, two laymen — Roger Babson, the chairman, and Frank G. Cook — and ten pastors. They gathered statistics throughout the churches named above and sent out questionnaires to ascertain reasons for the decline in church attendance and what might be done to remove it. Twenty suggestions seemed constructive to the committee, and they asked members of the commission "and others qualified to discuss special phases of the work." The results of these studies are embodied in the book. In the opening chapter Mr. Babson writes on "Outworn Customs." He advises to simplify joining the Church. "It is advisable that all questionable theological questions be excluded from public-worship services." "Churches of all denominations would greatly be helped by a simple membership pledge like the following, which can be signed by the most orthodox Fundamentalist or by the most ardent Liberal." (P. 9.) He advocates consolidation with other churches, to appeal for workers rather than for money, to offer different activities at the same hour of worship, to make the Sunday-school function properly. "Certainly the common custom of allowing children to use the church-building as a rough-house is outworn. It should be brought to an immediate and abrupt end." "Statistics show that only half of the Sunday-school teachers actually attend church." (P. 16.) "The purpose of the Sunday-school today is to train children for the Church. . . . Statistics, however, show that the majority of Sunday-schools are absolutely failing in this task. More young people would be in the Church today in many communities if there were no Sunday-schools therein and if the children had been trained to go to church instead." (P. 17.) According to a note in the preface all statistics in this

book "are applicable only to the Congregational and Christian churches. But it is fair to assume that all the large Protestant denominations are experiencing the same trends" (p. 4).

In chapter 2 the Rev. E. Byington lists the following seven causes for decline in church attendance: "the loss of certain favoring influences, competing attractions, the people's waiting mood, the Church's indifference, the age's independent spirit, the Church's failure to concentrate on its fundamental mission, and the unchristian character of so many church members,"—certainly a comprehensive summing up of reasons. As a remedy, J. E. Fiebiger discusses improving the character of the membership, chap. 3; Winslow L. Webber, helping the people economically, physical and mental healing, cooperative and other economic associations, joining the labor movement, etc. Gail Cleland, chap. 5, proposes vitalizing the sermon and worship, and Elbert M. Conover, in the next chapter, improving the church structure. Other chapters deal with the home and church attendance, young people, theological education, week-day religious education, church advertising, prayer, church-loyalty projects in their relation to church attendance, making the community church-minded, getting college students to church, and organizing an intensive campaign. In the chapter on getting college students to church we read the following interesting remarks: "It was the days when education was consecrated not only to the sharpening of brains, but to the development of Christian character which established the community verdict that the process was of unquestionable worth. . . . As a sequel to the expansion of education we have only to show a world in a worse state than it was before." (P. 111.) "But it is not *Christian education* that is found wanting; it is secular education, divorced from the religious impulse and a clear moral objective. The community has come to accept, and to take as a matter of course, this divorce,—the necessity of accepting extreme secularity in education. The Protestant churches have been financially able to sustain here and there a church-school or a college; but their results have been largely engulfed by the secular or pagan influences of the larger places of learning to which the graduates go for their higher education. The Roman Catholic Church alone has managed to maintain intact a considerable sector of its educational system within its own authority and supervision. If the adherents of that communion have grown to be twenty millions and its influence with its own people has survived better than that of the other churches, this is no small part of the reason." What a convincing argument for enlarging our own Christian day-school system, of which the author seems to be unaware, and for a Lutheran university!

Unfortunately, the one thing needful has been overlooked in this book, preaching the Gospel of Christ, and Him crucified. While we grant that such external methods as advocated here may help to increase church attendance, yet without the Gospel such church attendance will only serve to improve civil righteousness, *if it will serve to do that*. To obtain good church attendance, one will do well to follow the advice given by Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. 3, 14 to 4, 16. Preaching the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh; giving attendance to read-

ing, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglecting not the gift that God has given; meditating upon these things; giving oneself wholly to them; taking heed unto oneself and unto the doctrine; continuing in them, one will not only save himself and them that hear him, but will have a church attendance that will satisfy God and should fill the heart of the preacher with joy and gratitude.

TH. LAETSCH

The Miracle of Preaching. By J. Edgar Park. The Macmillan Company, New York. 184 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.75.

A new book that promises to inspire the preacher with new enthusiasm and to aid him in improving his pulpit work will always attract the attention of any preacher who is in love with his work and who desires to edify his congregation as he preaches Sunday after Sunday. It is perhaps seldom that any of the many books published on the subject of preaching will not contain at least some useful hints. So also the book which we are here presenting in our review columns. But, if no more than that can be said in favor of such a book, we do not feel that we can recommend it to our preachers.

J. H. C. FARR

Great Choices of the Last Week. By Benjamin Harrison Bruner. Nashville, Tenn. Cokesbury Press. 160 pages, $5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. Price, \$1.25.

Laughing at the Saints. By Roy L. Tawes. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 1937. 151 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. Price, \$1.00.

Roses in December. By Herbert Lockyer. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 162 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. Price, \$1.00.

We have listed these three sermon books in an ascending order, according to their value for the Lutheran preacher and reader. Bruner belongs to the Disciples of Christ and evidently has strong modernistic leanings. His addresses show a strong influence of the social gospel, as when he deprecates the saving of the individual soul and inveighs against doctrinal preaching. (P. 98.) He sneers at "creed-making" and at the "older theories of atonement." The book is redeemed only by those sections in which the author forgets his thesis and sets down paragraphs which are truly quotable, even from Lutheran pulpits.—The author of the second collection of addresses (not sermons, properly speaking) is a Methodist Episcopal minister at Seaford, Delaware. He is apparently a Fundamentalist and has many good paragraphs under striking topics or themes, but his primary thesis is contained in the statement (p. 149) that the "Methodist Church has ever been a champion of moral reform." This thought dominates the book and spoils it for general use.—The third book is by a member of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. It also contains no sermons in the real sense of the word, but topical addresses, with the "text," as a rule, only a motto. But while the form is not adequate, the content of the addresses is good. The author denies materialism and evolutionism, believes in the inspiration of the Bible, in the Virgin Birth, and in the vicarious atonement. In the address on "Justification by Faith" we find the sentences: "Justification" as used by Paul, and only by him, expresses an *implication* rather than an *infusion*. It signifies a change in man's legal relationship Godward and not a change

in his character. It is no more an infusion of righteousness than condemnation, as its opposite, is an infusion of wickedness." (P. 58.) People who hear and believe truths thus presented are having the way of salvation set before them.

P. E. KRETTZMANN

Statistical Year-Book of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1936. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 212 pages, 6×9 in. Price, \$1.00.

This book of 212 pages contains the usual wealth of statistical information concerning our Synod: the parochial reports, missions, educational institutions, parochial schools, Sunday-schools, charitable institutions, finances, etc. In addition it gives information in reference to the religious bodies of the United States, the number of adherents to the Christian religion throughout the world, and the Lutheran bodies in this country. The price charged for the book does not pay for the setting of the type and the printing. A rather bad mistake occurred which ought to be corrected by all who have the book: throughout the parochial reports the designation of services, English and German, ought to be reversed.

J. H. C. F.

BOOKS RECEIVED

From the Abingdon Press, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago:

Rule of the Road. By Anne Byrd Payson. 244 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.50.

From Barnes & Noble, Inc., New York:

The Supreme Court Issue and the Constitution. Comments Pro and Con by Distinguished Men. Edited by William R. Barnes and A. W. Littlefield. 149 pages, 5½×8½. Price, \$1.00.

From the Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn.:

Readings for Live Programs. Collected by Olaf Lysnes. 224 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.00.

In der Mainummer von *Luthertum* bietet Paul Althaus einen interessanten Artikel über *Iuxta vocationem*, „*Über lutherischen Lehre von Ordnung und Beruf*“, während Friedrich Haub „*Das jüdische Volk im Spiegel seiner Sprichwörter*“ behandelt. Auch haben wir den üblichen Zeitschriften- und Bücherbericht. — Im laufenden Heft von *Theologie der Gegenwart* werden besonders Bücher auf dem Gebiet der praktischen Theologie und Religionspädagogik besprochen.

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